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*Shanmukha*

## IN FOCUS

It is Tamil New Year time, and SHANMUKHA wishes its Readers and Contributors a very Happy PRAJOTPATI year.

Come Chaitra, every lip chants "Ram Nam", but who can surpass Saint Tyagaraja who breathed 'Ram Nam?' And the saint is cast in the role of an architect of Karnatak Music by a musician who was known for his unique Bani but never as a deep thinker or a fine writer. SHANMUKHA introduces the late M. D. Ramanathan as a writer of mark. The dissertation is well worth going miles to collect.

It is over seven years since this inimitable musician passed away and there seems to be none in the field to take over the Bani and fill in the void. In a reminiscing tone we recapitulate the maestro's style.

"Dance — Part of a Liberal Education", was an incisive talk delivered over forty years ago by versatile Shri N. Raghunatha Iyer, the then Assistant Editor, "The HINDU"; and the facts hold good even today, in the 'nineties.

The literary aspect of the Thumri, its Sahitya, as a renowned musicologist analyses, enlightens one on this Hindustani light classical form that has an impact of its own.

The inadequacy of technology and science in 'canning' the Art that is essentially to be propagated fresh and live and the incongruence of enslaving it by texts and clinical approach are the highlights of a dance exponent's report on a seminar on "Classical Dance Parampara-Oral and Textual.

A Rasika's Diary on Maharajapuram Viswanatha Iyer truly revives 'Memories Melodious' on the Sangeetha Bhoopathi's life and career.

Though steeped in tradition Natyacharya T. K. Mahalingam Pillai is not averse to changes and new trends. What he is against is to the sweeping changes in the name of innovation, or Sabharanjakam. His essay in Tamil on "Sampradayam and Sabharanjakam in Bharata Natyam" is an eye-opener.

The music world has lost many a giant performer-teacher. It was tragic that cruel Destiny should have snatched away veteran D. K. Jayaraman for ever even as he was being felicitated as the Sangitha Kalanidhi, of the year. In the Hindustani music, the grand-old Atrauli-Jaipur Gharana master, Pt. Wamanrao Sadolikar, a Karmayogi, fell a victim to Yama. The loss of Western music was no less. Musician-Composer-Critic Aaron Copland, the "musician born on the street" met with his end too. SHANMUKHA pays its Tributes to these Great Masters.



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## Tyagaraja, The Architect of Modern Karnatak Music

By

SIROMANI RAMANATHAN

(That the inimitable M. D. Ramanathan was a true Nadopasaka was known to all. But what was not known was that he was a deep thinker and a writer as well. Below we publish author MDR's dissertation on Saint Tyagaraja. Elsewhere SHANMUKHA pays tribute to this 'melody monarch' who has not [as yet] had a true successor).

Any casual listener or *rasika* of Karnatak music — be it a concert, a bhajan, a radio recital — is sure to enjoy at least a few melodies of Saint Tyagaraja. On such occasions the singer and the listener are simultaneously lifted to the higher regions of divine consciousness through the soul-stirring Kritis of the great composer. Some of his Kritis have the peculiar power of lifting the singer and the listener to a higher plane where they forget their mundane existence and the attendant limitations. And towards the close of a Kirti when the *mudra* or *ankitam* is sung, one is apt to pause for a moment and ask within oneself, "Who is this Tyagaraja? Was he a Deva or Gandharva? Could we ever possibly know him and his greatness?"

### INSIGHT INTO KAVIHRIDAYA

The majority of Vidvans and *rasikas*, not to speak of the lay listeners, are practically content with the mere enjoyment of the productions of the great Vaggeyakara. They are apt to forget the creator for the created. They are like the wondering pilgrim who simply gazes at the fascinating art-forms of our Indian temples without knowing the spiritual background and without ap-

preciating the inherent aesthetic grandeur. To such people let us say with all humility and sincerity that one cannot enjoy fully such imaginative products without an attempt to understand the *Kavihridaya*. After all it is the *Kavihridaya* that is reflected as it were in his compositions; and any attempt to get into the true spirit of his compositions ignoring completely the composer is naturally futile. It is therefore imperative to study the personality to appreciate fully his impersonal aspect.

Saint Tyagaraja is believed to be an incarnation of Bhagavan Valmiki, the 'Adhikavi', who sang the glories of Sri Ramachandra in his celebrated Ramayana in 24,000 verses. Curiously enough, Sri Tyagaraja also composed in all 24,000 Kritis singing the glories of his 'Ishta Deva', Sri Rama. His life was a complete dedication to Sri Rama and His service through sweet music saturated with Bhava, Raga, and Laya. In fact, his worship of Sri Rama was complete in itself inasmuch as it touched the fundamental *Karanatrayas* of mind, speech and action. In the Janaranjani Kirti *Smarane Sukhamu* Tyagaraja unambiguously describes the inner joy that he derived from *Ramanama Smara-*



na. In a Kriti in Dhanyasi he equates meditations on Rama to a bath in the Holy Ganga which is to the Hindus the most sacred act. Let it be remembered that it was only Tyagaraja who accomplished a course of *Japa of Ramanama* 96 crores of times — a thing unheard of in the annals of the devotional literature of our land. This *Japa* took over two scores of years, during which time the saint had celestial visions. Even now the devoted pilgrim may have *darshan* of the very Mandapa in the Pranatharthi Hara Swami Temple of Thiruvaiyar, where the Saint sat and carried on this Japayagna. The *Vachika* and *Kayika kainkaryas* to the Lord however, was incessantly performed when he sang the divine glories attended with the external worship of the *Eka Pæta Vighraha* of Sri Rama, his only *Kuladhana*.

#### KING OF RENOUNCERS

Judged by the usual standards, the private life of the poet was, as usual, a mixture of happiness and sorrow with a slight predominance of the latter. His own brother Jappesa was instrumental in the throwing of the '*Rama Vighraha*' in the river Kaveri. He (Jappesa) thus wanted to divert the mind of Tyagaraja to worldly things. This incident was after the saint's declining of King Sarabhoji's invitation to receive royal honours. Had Tyagaraja succumbed to the temptation he might have been forgotten even during his life. What would have been the fate of *Nidhisala Sukhama* by which song the very name Tyagaraja (king of renouncers) was practically substantiated? Is not this single song the essence of Tyagaraja's philosophy? — the quintessence of the wisdom of the Upanishads? Is there any parallel in point of Sangeetha, Sahitya and rhetoric to the oft-quoted line

*Mamata bandhanayuta narastuti sukham?*

It is nearly a century and a half since this saint-bard of Tiruvaiyar shook off his mortal coils. Yet the modern Karnatak world — nay the entire musical world — worships him as a *Mahapurusha*, a saint, poet, philosopher, composer, *Rama Bhakta Siromani* all rolled into one, a world teacher. He is in the first place one of the most prolific composers that our holy land ever produced. His kritis are sung with special fervour and devotion by all — lay-men, novices in music or finished artists — each in his own way. They are highly elastic inasmuch as they suggest more and more subtle ideas as one plunges deeper. Rightly, therefore, are the kritis of Tyagaraja considered to be the modern musical Upanishads and collectively referred to as Thyagopanishads.

The secret of Tyagaraja's art is mainly twofold. In the first place he was a staunch devotee after the model of Purandara Dasa, the *Karnataka Sangeetha Pitamaha*. The emphasis on *Bhakthi* free from all earthly considerations has been unmistakably laid in a number of his compositions. The Dhanyasi Kriti *Sangeetha Gnanamu*, which is very popular, proclaims to man mildly but firmly that without devotion, knowledge of music will lead to wrong paths. In the Jayamanohari Kriti *Ni Bhakthi Bhagya Sudhanidhi*, he says that life is worth living only if one swims in the ambrosial ocean of *bhakti* — no matter whether he is *deva* or a learned Brahmin. All of them will, be, according to Tyagaraja, mere dead weights if they lead a life devoid of devotion. To the less sincere and pretending, whose

mind ever dwells in the senses, Tyagaraja interrogates: 'Do you mean to say that my Rama will ever be merciful so long as you allow your mind to indulge in the labyrinth of wordly life?' *Manasu vishayanata* in Natakurunji.

#### PERSONAL-IMPERSONAL

To Tyagaraja Sri Rama was a living entity who always lived with him and shared his life. It is said that he worshipped his *Vighraha* with such devotion that it actually accepted the *prasada* that he offered. In Tirupathi the curtain put up before the *Moola Vighraha* dropped down as soon as he sang *Tera-teeyagarada* in *Gowlipantu*. During his pilgrimage, a dead Brahmin was revived by his singing *Najivadhara* in *Bilahari*. Lastly when some robbers attacked the saint on his return from Kovur. Sri Rama and Lakshmana saved him by attacking the robbers in the guise of two valiant princes. To him Sri Rama was thus the son of Dasaratha, an incarnation of Vishnu, at the same time beyond the "Holy Trinity", who however was always looking after the *Yoga-kshema* of his devotees. Such an all embracing 'personal-impersonal' conception is very well mirrored in his Kritis like *Manasa Sri Rama Chandruni* (Isamanohari), *Telisi Rama* (Poorna-Chandrika), *Mathilona Yochana* (Kolahalam), *Dasarathi* (Todi) and others.

#### A SEER

The second aspect of the secret of Tyagaraja's art is his vision of the future. The credit of inaugurating the lyrical era of Indian music goes undoubtedly to Sri Tyagaraja. He found that profound ideas could be preserved and transmitted to posterity through such compositions replete with *raga*

*bhava* and with the minimum of words. Even his illustrious contemporaries, Muthuswamy Dikshitar and Syama Sastry, not to speak of his predecessors, could not escape the firm grip of poetry over music. They followed the path of Jayadeva, Kshetragna and Narayana Tirtha. Further, Tyagaraja assumed one bold step in the devotional career of our land by giving prominence to *bhakthi* devoid of *Sringara*. Perhaps he thought that we in the Kaliyuga with all its influence would be much more safe with such a *bhakti*.

Simplicity, magnanimity and purity are the three outstanding features of Tyagaraja's compositions. They are saturated with *bhava* and have got a universal appeal. He himself compares his kritis to the sweet grapes which need no effort to be tasted — *Sogasuga Mridanga Talamu* in Sri Ranjani. In the span of a few lines of Sahitya he infused the essence of a voluminous epic. The entire Ramayana, for instance, from the incarnation of Sri Rama to His coronation, is epitomised as it were in the wellknown Hamsadhvani Kriti, *Sri Raghukula*. In the Divyanama Kriti *Sri Rama Jayarama* (Yadukulakambhoji), the poet vividly pictures the different episodes from the *Avatar* to the wedding of Seeta. He incidentally exclaims within himself the amount of *tapas* that Dasaratha, Kausalya, Viswamitra, Lakshmana, Janaka and others should have performed to have Rama as their own *Tapamemi chadeno theliya*. But for the immortal compositions of Sri Tyagaraja, Karnatak music may not have become as rich as it is today. Its long history, traceable to the dim Vedic ages, the galaxy of composers right from the times of Jayadeva and Purandara Dasa, the eternal tonal principle, the wonderful Raga Tala system — all



these will be as pale as the crescent moon but for the spontaneous and divine outpourings of Tyagaraja. He created music. He sang music. He spoke music and he lived in music.

The compositions of Tyagaraja are thus highly lustrous crystals of Sangeetha, Sahitya and rhetoric. He combines music along with the *Puranas*, *Ithihasas*, philosophy and world-wisdom. They (the kritis) breath high poetry in simple words. They are the *Bhagavad Geetha* of the philosopher, the *Ratnakara* of the music student and the *Ramayana* of the *Kavya Rasika*. The contents of many of his songs have become practically proverbial and authoritative and are always cited by his devotees —

*Endaro Mahanubhavulu* (Sriraga), *Santamuleka* (Sama). They deserve plural research, literal, musical and philosophical. They are eternal like the Himalayas and the Holy Ganga. They are, besides, popular like the *Ramayana* and are universal in their appeal.

It is well-nigh impossible completely to picture the different facets of this multi-phased diamond in the short span of an article. Tyagaraja and his Kritis are life-studies and to the eager aspirant they prove to be perennial fountains of nobility, ability and divine beauty.

(From the collection of  
Shri P. G. Krishnamoorthy)

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## The Melody Monarch MDR\*

By

Dr. (Smt.) SULOCHANA RAJENDRAN

“When (Tiger) Varadachari himself comes alive once you start singing, what else do you need?” said the Guru to his disciple who stood in all humility, seeking a ‘written recommendation’ for a concert chance! Could there be any better testimonial a disciple could dream of, given so spontaneously and magnanimously? The lucky sishya was none other than the Malabar lad, Manjapara Devasa Ramanathan, who at the threshold of a prospective Science career gave it up and instead chose the hazardous path of ‘Nadopasana’, and the Guru instantly recognised in the lad’s vibrant bass, a voice rich enough to communicate ‘his own musical conceptions better than he himself could’.

The tryst with destiny thus started in 1944 when the 20-year-old Ramana- than, popularly known as MDR, came to Madras, to learn under the feet of ‘Tiger’ Varadachariar for ‘Sangita Siro- mani at Kalakshetra. And ever since it had been a steady rise and he hit it lofty and unique till the cruel hands of fate stilled his voice in April, 1984.

A man of simple needs and humble deportment, MDR surrendered himself unto his Guru and became a veritable chela in every respect, be it in musical impulse, application or even gesticulation. Yet, original he remained in musical communication. He quenched his musical thirst at the ‘spring’ that his

Guru was and enlarged his own musical vision through relentless ‘Sadhaka’.

#### EXPLORATIVE IMPROVISATION

MDR’s considerably low, bass, pitch was his very strength and vitality. His voice texture suited the Vilamba pace better (it is fairly well known that his Guru ‘Tiger’ was a pastmaster in both Vilamba and Madhyamakala) and he cultured it finely so that it “gained majesty and depth and moved like a great mountain stream”, and made him a melody monarch.

A staunch devotee at the temple of tradition, MDR fathomed its labyrinth and proved that its depth was inexhaustible and the scope it held for exploration and extemporisation — call it innovation if you will — immense. So much so, explorative extemporisation became almost a second nature to him. He had no penchant for pyrotechnics; nevertheless he was no inferior to any in that plane.

The very opening stance of an alapana or a kriti rendition would reach the ‘soul’ of the Raga or the composition. A gold digger that he was, he would probe every possible nuance, subtle gamaka, and aesthetics, often striking it rich and heightening the bhava of the Raga and Sahitya. For he believed, to quote him, “Sangeetagnana led to eternal moksha”.

\*The void created by MDR’s death in that unique Bani is still not filled, even after Seven Years, SHANMUKHA reminisces the inimitable stylist’s music.



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Ragas like Ananda Bhairavi, Bilahari, Kambhoji, Gaulipantu, Ritigowla Sri, Saama, Saveri and Yadukula Kambhoji, to mention a few, came alive in his expansive alapanas, each with a totality of image full of emotional depth and exquisite contours. His application of long pauses (Kaarvai) and discreet use of 'silence' too added substantive weight to his alapanas.

### REFRESHINGLY MAGNIFICENT

And, how many approached Sri Tyagaraja's Pancharatnas with such reverence and introspection? Never would MDR serve them as a 'Cutcheri ritual' or warming up exercise.

His very opening leisurely, pause-laden, *Mahanubhavulu* in grand bass would strike the core of Sri Raga and stir your heartstrings. Then the gliding *Andariki Vandanam* would all be in humility and reverence. With an incisive Niraval of *Ramabhaktudaina Tyagarajanuthuni Nijadaasulaina* the edifice of *Endaro Mahanubhavulu* would emerge refreshingly original and magnificent.

With his uncluttered, calm music MDR could bring about a revelation of many a musical gem. He would never strip open the "Tera" but try to 'live' through the anguish and plaint in Saint Tyagaraja's expressions starting with *Parama Purusha Dharmadi Mokshamula* at Anupallavi and rounding it off with *Tera Tiyyagaraada*, (Pallavi), in Gaulipantu.

### SANGEETA SAMARPANA

Few could match his involvement with which he evoked *Sabari Bhagyamenthanine Varninthunu* (Mukhari) or

invoked the Rama Dhoota in *Paahi Rama Dhoota* set in a rare mode, *Vasanta Varali*. His *Jo Jo Rama, Anandakana* (Ritigowla) would truly be a lullaby and the same Raga when he sang *Janani Ninnuvina* would turn you into ecstasy. If he ever rendered *Evarigai Avathaaramethithivo* (Devamanohari) it always echoed the composer's evocation as to the purpose of the Lord's Avathara.

MDR's Niraval and Swaraprastharas too formed part of his Nadopasana. They were invested with their own musical entity. It had always been "Sangeeta Samarpana" for him even on a concert platform. Though not bothered about audience reactions, he did bring about a change in their perceptions and musical experience. He was not wanting in quick wit or retort either. At a recital in Delhi once, in early sixties, he sprung a surprise choosing for elaboration, an odd stance (not usually taken up for Niraval), *Kaamini Vesadaariki Saadhvi Nadatalemaina Delusuna?* in *Rama Neeyeda* (Kharaharapriya). After a few rounds, the audience, hitherto restless, (perhaps due to his grotesque gesticulations?) felt the 'dig' and settled down calm and quiet.

MDR had the chagrin to dart *Mariyada Teliyakane* (Suruti) at the audience who trooped out enmasse during Thani. Fame and fortune had little attraction for him. He received State honours and awards — Padmashri and Sangeet Natak Akademi Award. The Indian Fine Arts, Madras, conferred on him the Sangeeta Kala Sikhamani. However, he did regret that he was not appreciated widely. Though a composer of merit (about 300 compositions he is said to have composed), he never propagated them himself and very few know him as a composer.



Not many understood the true essence of his music. The low pitch, the considerably slow pace, provided no 'excitement'. Some found him 'dreary' and unprofessional. And many maligned him for his facial contortions and gestures. But as a connoisseur once observed, "music was to him as an intensely felt experience, a shared personal expression of aesthetic sensitivity and enjoyment". According to another 'fan' of his, "MDR's music appeals more to the sense than to the intellect,

though it is basically intellectual, both in form and content. Its beauty might sometimes elude the ear, but seldom the memory; its weight might occasionally fatigue the mind, but never the spirit".

But nothing could be more apt than a scribe's pithy comment that "he was a treasure that we probably squandered".

— *Music Triangle Souvenir (1985)*



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## Dance—Part of A Liberal Education\*

By

N. RAGHUNATHA IYER

The dance is primarily an art of communication. It aims at communicating a mood (*bhava*). It does this by means of gestures, postures, play of features and steps regulated by rhythm and accompanied by appropriate music. It is a hieratic art, having originated as part of temple ritual. Long confined to temples and the courts of Kings, it came in course of time to be patronised by all classes. Using the utmost economy of method, it was yet eminently successful in achieving its effects because the audience was not only familiar with the theme and technique but was receptive to the influence and atmosphere.

#### AIM OF DANCE

In the past decade or two, there has been a considerable and gratifying revival of interest in the art. Confining ourselves to Bharatanatyam for the moment, displays of the act have become almost as common as musical concerts. The anti-nautch movement, which in my younger days laid its palsy hand on this glorious art, has vanished like a bad dream. The danger now is rather that we may go to the other extreme. It is undoubtedly all excellent thing that the taboo has been broken by young girls (and boys too) of all classes taking in increasing numbers to the dance. In course of time, this should provide the desideratum of an intelligent and sym-

pathetic audience. But far too many fond parents inflict upon inapt children a training which is not only exceedingly difficult but which, if it is to turn out a good artiste, presupposes certain natural advantages and inborn qualities. An intelligent and expressive face, a figure capable of sinuous grace and, more important than any of these, a capacity for *rasaaswaadana* are indeed indispensable. For, those who have not the power to experience aesthetic emotion cannot possibly evoke an aesthetic response in others.

A girl may have all these advantages. And yet she may fare worse than her less fortunate sister, because the acquisition of the mere technique and externals of so intimate an art may encourage the unlovely vice of exhibitionism unless the impulse is held in check by the conventions of a traditional society or the inherited discipline of a professional class. Neither of these wholesome factors can be assumed as a matter of course so far as our contemporary society is concerned. The feeling of grave exaltation and earnest devoutness, as of one partaking in some holy mystery, that used to characterise the average audience present at the famous Bhagavata Mela dramas staged in the Tanjore villages of Uthukadu, Melatoor and Soolamangalam, has now all but disappeared. On the middle

The Presidential Address delivered at the Third South Indian Natyakala Conference, organised in 1949 by the Indian Institute of Fine Arts and held at Museum Theatre, Egmore, Madras. N. Raghunatha Iyer was then the Assistant Editor, THE HINDU.



class households from which most of the votaries of the art of dance as well as the audience are now being drawn, secularism has settled like a blight. To imagine that a girl taught to render with *abhinaya* a *Krishna Karnamrita* sloka keeps her mind anchored firmly in the faith that it is not carnal love that she depicts but the lila of the Lord is to assume the pervading influence of a home atmosphere which is simply not there.

But, as a matter of fact, the *rasika* has more often reason to complain that the immature youths of both sexes who have been taught the elements of the grammar of dance are capable of transmitting no worthwhile aesthetic impulse at all. Bharata Natya falls into two divisions, *Nritta* and *Nritya*. The broad distinction between the two is that *Nritya*, of which *abhinaya* is the core, is *bhava-pradana*. That does not mean that, *Nritta* is devoid of *bhava*. There is an exquisite pleasure to be obtained from the contemplation of the infinite variety of graceful if stylised poses which result from the accomplished rendering of the hundred odd *adaivus* within the dance-forms known as *Alarippu*, *Jatiswaram*, *Tillana* and to some extent the *Varna*. For it is the *Nritta* that shows the dance at its most dynamic. And the young girl all intent on the perfect co-ordination of hand and foot and torso to the exacting requirements of *Tala* has no occasion or indeed time to be self-conscious. The spectator, watching this natural expansion of the young spirit in the dimensions of movement and rhythm, is often reminded of the lamb frisking in sheer *joi-de-vivre*, or the deer rubbing herself against the horns of the *Krishnamriga* (buck) of which we have an unforgettable vignette in the *Saakuntalam*.

Let us now look at the *Nritya* which expresses itself; through the *Sabda*, *Varna*, *Pada*, etc. Here *Abhinaya*, which falls into three categories, *anga*, *praty-anga* and *upanga*, calls for a perfect co-ordination of the limbs, the parts of the body and the features. The hands and the eyes play the most important part. In *abhinaya* the hands develop almost a life of their own, well described in the old texts as *hasta prana*. The *mudras* or gestures are comparatively limited in number of *Bharatanatya*. At the same time, the old books say that the hands are as many as there are things to express. That does not mean, however, that the artiste is at liberty to improvise as the fancy takes her or to indulge in a riot of what is called self-expression. For the dance is a deliberate art, producing willed ends through calculated means. Look at this description of the *paatra* of danseuse in the *Abhinaya Darpana*. She should be "very lovely, young, self-confident, charming, agreeable, dexterous in handling the critical passages, quite at home on the stage, expert in posing hands and body," and so on.

#### ESSENCE OF ABHINAYA

Two of these requirements are worth dwelling upon for a moment. Stage fright may be got over with comparatively little difficulty. But self-confidence is another matter. It comes from an attitude towards the business on hand which is almost as detached as that of the scientist towards his experiment. It will not do for the actress or the *nartaki* to be lost in the transports which she must coolly work to induce in the audience. And that is what is more explicitly stated in the other term which the translator renders as "dexterous in handling the critical passages". The original says "*Kusalaa graha-mokshayoh*" which means "expert in

grasping and releasing, emphasising and relaxing the stress of emotion". Now, can we justly maintain that the young girls of the age of twelve or thirteen who are in such large numbers coming up for *arangetram* every year have the self-possession that comes of maturity?

#### MUDRAS

Then there is the problem of mastery of *mudras*. The technique is easily learnt by intelligent children. And just as children learn *swara* singing in a *chitta* (formal style), the more common *mudras* may be mastered with sufficient ease, so as to require no viable effort for the co-ordination which is basic to all dance. But unless the spirit underlying the conventional gesture-language is imbibed, it will not be easy to put *expression* into your rendering. Take the *sikhara* *mudra*, one of the simplest and most frequently used. It is represented by the four fingers bent into the palm and the thumb raised. Its "usage" is given somewhat differently in different texts. According to the most authoritative of these, it comprehends a god, Manmatha, such material objects as a bow, a pillar, a tooth and the body, such relationships as husband and lover, such immaterial states as silence and recollection, such acts as entering, questioning, saying 'No,' untying the girdle, embracing, letting fly certain weapons and pounding, and such a phenomenon as the sound of a bell. The connections of some of these objects with the symbol may be obvious to those who have a certain knowledge of life. Others may, be just, arbitrary ascriptions. But it is wiser not to be too positive in these matters. There may be an essential if forgotten relationship between the gesture and the

significance. A literary parallel is to be found in the term "beam" which as Ananda Coomaraswamy points out in his paper on "*Literary Symbolism*" is used to describe in current usage both 'ray' and 'timber' harking back to the original conception of the immanence of Fire in the "wood" of which the world is made. The point I wish to make is that if *abhinaya* in its use of the *mudras* is not to be merely something done by rote and again not a chaotic exuberance of private symbolisms, the artiste should by long study and meditation be able to get at the heart of the accepted symbolism and put it to new but congruent uses with a scrupulous regard for *auchityam* (appropriateness). We may easily compile a dictionary of *mudras*. But a dancer can no more become a master of the art by conning it than a writer can become a stylist by memorising the lexicon.

Whereas the hands are largely used to convey explicit meanings, the movements of the head and, even more of the eyes are used to express subjective feelings and motions. A famous verse says,

"The song should be sustained in the throat;  
its meaning must be shown by the hands;  
the mood must be shown by the glances."

Here 'meaning' and 'mood' may be taken to correspond to the "*artha bhava*" and the "*sangita bhava*" respectively which the singing of a song brings out. The "*artha bhava*" is the emotion conveyed by the words of the song, the *sangita bhava* the purely musical mood which the *raga* evokes, especially by its dominant notes.

In dance, the play of features and especially of the eyes has an immediacy



of appeal which suggests that the purely intellectual element in the act of cognition and communication is reduced to a minimum if not actually excluded altogether. The *Natya Sastra* speaks of "eight glances". The *Abhinaya Darpana* also gives a longer list of fortyfour: some of the names themselves — *snigdha* (tender) *adbhuta*, (marvellous), *karuna* (full of pathos), *Vismaya* (astonished) — show that the appeal is to the primary emotions. And the mechanism, if I may so call it, of these purposeful glances is equally simple and readily effective by drawing upon our common human nature. Thus astonishment is shown by eyes "quickly raised, straight-staring". Even a child seeing that sudden expression in your eyes knows that you are feeling astonishment.

But if the eyes are the windows of the soul they cannot obviously give you a glimpse of what is actually not to be found inside. Now the *Nayikaa-Nayaka* relationship through which *srinagara* (the sentiment of love) expresses itself depends for its subtlest intimations on the ministering eyes. Take this sloka from the *Amaru Sataka*, the well-known centum of erotic verses which in the old days figured largely in the repertoire of abhinaya;

*Smararasanadeepoorenodhah punar  
gurusetubhir  
yad api vidhrataas tisthanty aaraad  
apoornamanorathaah  
tad api likhitaprakhyair angaih paras-  
param unmukhaah  
nayananalineenalaaneetam pibanti  
rasam priyaah*

("Caught in the torrent of love but held by a strong dam, so near yet with desire unfulfilled, the lovers face

each other motionless like painted figures, and drink of the dew of love through the stalks of the lotuses which are each other's eyes.")

Well, how do you expect children who are innocent of the master-passion to convey by their glances the ardour, the self-restraint and the fulfilment which the poet suggests?

Children are good mimics. But few indeed are gifted with that artlessness which comes of perfect command of art. Of the Divine Child in the *Rasa Lila*, Suka says that He played with the gopis as a child plays with his own image in the mirror (*Yathaarbhakah svapratibimba vibhramah.*)

That kind of intense awareness should also go with the sustaining of the *Sthayee bhava*. Some are born with the *vasana* which gives them this precocious wisdom. In the old days when the dance was the *kula-vidya* of a separate class, a child of seven beginning her tuition, under the guidance of her own grandmother perhaps, not only learnt the technique but often unconsciously imbibed the atmosphere. And it is worth remembering that, though they finished their training by the twelfth year or so, they looked upon it not only as a whole-time job but also a life-time job with which domestic ties were not allowed to interfere. It may be that for a gifted and fortunate few, that kind of dedication is not only possible today but congenial. But for the vast majority of learners who are attracted to this newly re-discovered art, the best thing is to approach it as part of a liberal education and not as preparation for a vocation. Most of what is comprehended in *Nritta* derives from the *Tandava* and is as suitable for boys as for girls.

As in ancient Greece it might indeed be a valuable part of physical culture — provided it is not inflicted on the unwilling like gymnastics. Girls might in addition be taught something of *Nritya* also, the emphasis being upon the devotional rather than the erotic. If, further, the dance is taught to them as part of *sangita* — which was defined as *Geetam, Nrityam cha Vaadyam cha* — and they are simultaneously introduced to the pleasures of the Sanskrit drama, the glories of *Kshetragnya Pa-*

das and the traditional arts which comprehended such essentially feminine pre-occupations as costumes and cosmetics, they will be able to restore to the home something of the old gladness which the hurly-burly of modern life has so largely banished. In that way the authentic Indian culture may again rise like the Phoenix, instead of the vulgar hybrids which throng the market-place.

Courtesy : THE HINDU

## NRITTA OR NRITYA

Two myths are well-known in relation to the origin of dance :

(a) *Natyashastra* (4.5-18) describes how Brahma proposed to Bharata that he should show the production of *Amritamanthana* (*Samavakara*) & *Tripuradaha* (*Dima*) to Shiva. Brahma requested Shiva to agree to witness the show. He agreed and *Tripuradaha* was produced by Bharata's troupe along with *Purvaranga* at Kailasa, the abode of Shiva. Delighted by the production, Shiva suggested to Brahma that the dance consisting of *Karana-s* and *Angahara-s* that was performed by himself (Shiva) every day in the evening, should be added to the *Purvaranga*, Brahma agreed and Shiva directed his Gana Tandu to teach the above dance to Bharata.

This myth suggests one basic fact and that is this. Brahma symbolises all that is directly related to *Vak* (sound, speech) and Shiva symbolises all that is related to *Anga* (*Prana*) or bodily movement, dance being its artistic culmination. Naturally dance has drums as its allies. Hence Shiva has the *Damaru* in his hand. On the other hand, Brahma is associated mainly with Vedic recitation. Dramatic performance symbolises a fusion of these two streams. Hence the above narrative.

(b) *Sangita Ratnakara* (7.7,8) says that Parvati taught *Lasya* (the graceful dance, as different from the *Tandava* of Shiva) to Usha, the daughter of Bana, Usha taught it to the women of Saurashtra and the latter spread it among women of other regions.

The above 'myth' presents an interesting fusion of the timeless and spaceless with what operates in time and space. Parvati is timeless and spaceless, and women of Saurashtra are in definite space and time. Usha is in the middle, she is a mythological character, yet associated with Bana, the ruler of Sonitapura which is identified as Tejpur of Assam. Thus the above myth uses Usha as a bridge between the timeless — spaceless and time — space. Incidentally, it also establishes a definite connection between Assam and Saurashtra in the context of dance.

From an essay "Myths in Sangitashastra" by Dr. Prem Lata Sharma published in "Myths and Mythology."



# SAHITYA OF THUMRI—Part I\*

By

CHANDER SHEKHAR PANT

The classical music of upper India is in a phase which may be termed as predominantly the age of the Khyal. Though apparently a vocal form, the Khyal has been recognised by experts as having had its vital repercussions and counterpart in the instrumental techniques and forms and it is for that reason that the use of an expression like the age of the Khyal may be justified. In spite of this preponderance, however, the Khyal has had its limitations and its plight. No sooner had it established itself on the high pedestal of the classical pantheon, than it found itself sandwiched from many a side. The high brow, came forward with disparaging remarks about the liberties it took in some of its manifestations. The common listener blamed it for its sophisticated techniques and the paucity and the blurred aspect of its word-content. And lo ! The "*La belle dame sans merci*" dared to make a trespass and bursting forth with the Thumri threatened to cast her own siren spell and overwhelm and carry away the audience in her favour. What was the Khyal singer to do in this plight ? And how could he acquit himself ?

Before a Khyal recital has reached its climax, a certain reaction is already there among the listeners. They are symptomatic of a keen longing to get some relaxation, some indulgence, some fulfilment; What is all that ? It is that the artist must either sing a bhajan

or a Thumri, something really charming, something really enthralling. And his counterpart, the instrumentalist, must come forward with some Gat in the Thumri anga, some Kajri, some Chaiti, some Pahari. What is at the back of this direct and irresistible appeal which the Thumri commands ? Is it the tune or the word-content or both ?

All literary and artistic manifestations have been recognised by Walter Pater and his French and German contemporaries as being governed by two dominant tendencies — classicism and romanticism. The classical stands for authority, order, the grandiose, the pure, the temperate, the pedantic, the conventional, the narrowly academic working out of refinement. The romantic stands for liberty, strength, strangeness, curiosity, novelty, experiment and a revolt against and a departure from the set rules and stereotyped practices, and it stands for all that has a direct, unfettered and unsophisticated appeal.

Without any further digression, let me come to the main topic, namely, the literary aspect of the Thumri.

The word Thumri has been defined in the standard lexicon of Hindi usage — the *Hindi Shabda Sagar* of Kashi Nagari Pracharini, as follows.

"It is a small geeta i.e., a song; a song with two movements, not having more than one Antara."

The other meaning given to the term is rumour or gossip. The dictionary does not give the etymology explicitly, but the root is clear. The word '*Thum*' or '*Thumak*' denotes the kind of dancing steps used by children in their frolic or in dance generally. It also denotes a gait which has, according to the *Shabdasagar*, an air of pride, conceit or simulation with all its delicate emotive shades or nuances (*Thasak*). The affix '*ri*' is very often used in the sense of 'pertaining to' in the possessive or associative sense, like *Kisan Rukmini ri boli*, like *hama-ri*, *tuma-ri*. Another word of close proximity bearing on the topic is *Thumka*, meaning, of small stature. Thus, by its over-all etymology the word Thumri is suggestive of a song which is small in size, and is associated with dance and all its delicate shades. At least, in one of its aspects, the Thumri is a reorientation and descendant of the Dhamar which too has the three-fold meaning of the special steps, and the rhythm, and the song associated with these. Like the Dhamar, the Thumri also has a branch devoted to the colour sports of Vraja, with a devotional and festive tinge, touching as it does the Rasa of Radha and Krishna and the cowherds and the milkmaids of Vraja, and the rhythm in its measurement is also of the same number of beats, namely the Deepchandi. So far as this aspect is concerned, therefore, Prof. D. Ojha is not far from the truth when he goes to Vraj to trace the origin of Thumri (*Sangeeta Kala Vihar*, August, 1959 issue).

This cultural and only one-sided aspect of the Thumri, however, should not be carried too far, because as a specialised art form of music, the Thumri, as we know it today, has found its full-fledged development in Lucknow and

Banaras; it is there that it reached its high water-mark. As Prof. S. K. Chaudhary remarks "Lucknow was its mother and Banaras its sweetheart. From these cities the Thumri has travelled far and wide in the country."

## PROPAGATOR & PATRON

I want to raise a note of warning and caution to those, however, who regard the Thumri as an invention of Wajid Ali Shah or Sadiq Ali Khan. Because already in 1834 when Captain Willard first published his '*A Treatise on the Music of Hindostan*', Thumri had been recognised as an established form "in an impure dialect of the Vrajabhasha". Nevertheless, so far as the literary aspect envisaged in the existing repertoire of the Thumri is concerned, it is not possible to take up authentic examples earlier than the time of Nawab Wajid Ali Shah of Lucknow who was born in 1822, installed on the gaddi in 1847, forced to abdicate and sent to Matia Burj, Calcutta in 1856 where he died in 1887. As pointed out by Shri K. M. Munshi in his illuminating Kulapati's letters,

"Wajid Ali Shah, had a fine command of the Persian language and was a master of Urdu. He wrote over a hundred works in these languages and his poems fill several big volumes. Himself an adept in music, he was the greatest patron of music and dance in his days, music and dance were the breath of the Parikhana and its master was the patron of the well-known Lucknow Thumri .... He dramatised his romantic poems and prepared a ballet known as '*Rahas*' — an Urdu corruption of the word Rasa. Its theme was the sport of Krishna and Radha. It must have been a delight to Wajid Ali Shah's admirers to see him in his solid corpulence playing the part of Shri Krishna with



a 'mukut' on his head valued at a lakh of rupees ..... After deposition when he lived in exile at Calcutta, Wajid Ali continued to stage his *Rasa*. Including technicians, the troupe numbered three hundred and sixtyone souls of which eightyfour were women. Their total salaries amounted to Rs. 11,859 per month."

The learned author further points out :

"Wajid Ali Shah was the father of the modern Urdu stage. At his command Amanat, the well-known Urdu poet of Lucknow, wrote the famous *Inder Sabha* which became the model for all later Urdu plays. When the *Inder Sabha* was staged, Wajid Ali played the title role of *Inder* (Indra) and there is little doubt that his part took part in the play. The romantic mysteries of Wajid Ali's court are certainly brought vividly to life in this realistic drama."

#### KALKA BINDADIN GHARANA

It is further noteworthy that in dance, Wajid Ali's Guru was the famous Kathak dancer, Thakur Prasadji, father of Bindadin and Kalka Prasadji, and grandfather of Shambhu Maharaj and the late Achhan Maharaj — all adorning a school not only famous for Kathak dance but also for Thumri and particularly that aspect of it which is called *bhava batana* i.e. an emotional interpretation of the 'Bol' with rather informal gestures in a sitting pose, accompanying the vocal rendering in all its shades and nuances.

Thakur Prasadji, Guru of Wajid Ali Shah, was a specialist in the *Natwari* — the delicate feminine aspect of the Kathak dance. All these elements go to form the background against which the Thumri worked out not only the delicate

graces like the *Murki* but also a literary garb most suitable for its requirements. It is remarkable, however, that the language which was chosen for the Thumri was neither Urdu nor Persian, but Hindi. What kind of Hindi we shall presently see. As pointed out by Prof. Arnold, "Oudh was the garden, the granary and the queen province of India. The ruler was a Mussalman. Essentially it was a Hindu realm."

#### LANGUAGE OF THUMRI

The doyens of Thumri were therefore wise and far-sighted enough to choose the Hindi of the region to clothe the Thumri in. It was a mixed jargon of Lucknow and of the eastern districts.

Thus, in his famous Thumri in *Bhairavi*, Wajid Ali Shah mourned and wailed over his pathetic departure from Lucknow :

*Baabul More Naihar chooto Jaay !  
Char Kahar Mil Dooliyan Mangaavo,  
Apna Bigaana Chooto Jaay !!*

The pathos here is one of the bride departing from her parents, and is heightened by the deliberate act of sending for the *doolie* and its four bearers. In spite of his masculine voice, the late Ustad Faiyaz Khan once brought the distinguished audience of a music conference to tears by his rendering of this Thumri.

The *Bol* or the actual word or expression which is to be interpreted by the singer in all its emotive shades is the soul of the Thumri. This requires not only a temperament and an exuberance of emotion and imagination in the artiste but also a restraint not to fall into the elaborate and lengthy passages of

improvisations characteristic of the *Khyal*. The literary aspect is thus quite an important matter in the Thumri. The *Khyal* singer can and very often does throw the words of his song to winds. This a Thumri singer cannot afford to do. No Thumri singer can flout a passage of which the literary meaning is ambiguous, of which the literary garb does not suit the tender and delicate sense. The essence of the delicacy that was Lucknow of the time — which its *nazakat* and *na'fasat* — was thus poured into the mantle vouchsafed for the Thumri. And this mantle was not the royal robe. It was a common raiment within the easy reach of any Tom, Dick, Harry, any Mary, Jane or Susan.

One of the greatest of the Thumri composers of Lucknow, Kadar Piya, had fully realised this factor and once expressed his views in unequivocal forms. Kadar Piya was the son of an illegitimate descendant of the second Emperor of Avadh. His original name was Wazir Mirza, and with full titles it was Mirza Bala Qadar Jung Nawab Wazir Mirza Bahadur (1836-1902).

He was a poet, a painter, a musician, and a scholar of Urdu and Persian, but chose the *Bhakha* as he called it, being the Urdu corruption of *Bhasha*, for his Thumris. On being asked why he did not compose in Urdu, he replied,

"I shall never do that in view of the common audience I have. I shall write only in *Bhakha* — the dialect spoken in the households of the Hindus of Lucknow and the neighbouring villages".

Urdu in his opinion was meant for the select few. Kadar Piya has therefore used pure Hindi words, and where he

has used words of Persian origin, he has shaped and moulded them on the Hindustani anvil. He was in fact a great protagonist of Hindu-Muslim unity. He has written a work named *Nayan-Dil Samvad*. The eyes and the heart each try to impute to the other the responsibility for the pangs of love. This idea frequently reverberates in his Thumris. His life was typical. Apart from a number of illegitimate connection, he had seven wives. His refined, delicate, voluptuous, acutely erotic temper with occasional devotional outbursts is reflected in the text of his Thumris.

#### CHHOTA KHYALS

While many of his Thumris are of the type of *Chhota Khyals* with a lighter strain and the concomitant spuriousness of *Raga*, he has also to his credit a large number of compositions which have a full developed Thumri personality, being in the slow tempo of the *Deepchandi* or the *Punjabi Theka*. Here is a typical Thumri of Kadar Piya in *Raga Zila Khamaj*, *Deepchandi Taal*.

*Eri Guyan kaise bhejoon paati  
Kadar Oar !  
Kaahoo ko saati, paati Aaaphi Chali  
jaati Kadar Oar !  
Ek rain andheri paapit, sooni se jaisa  
Saampit  
Kaise mora baara jiyara, haaye,  
dase jaati Kadar Oar !!*

A beloved of Kadar is pining for him. She does not know how to send the message. How she wishes that the love letter could walk over to him by itself. The dark night is a veritable female snorer, and the forlorn bedstead is lurking like a female serpent — oh the agony ! it is mercilessly springing her tender and innocent heart.



Everything is feminine here — even the simile and the metaphor. And the ejaculation haaye typically savours of the voluptuous, mingled as it is with the agony of separation. Again, in a Thumri of Pilu, Kadar would like to have a sarcastic retort from a jealous and disappointed maiden —

*Mori akhiyaan doondrahi, ho tumka  
parat naahi kahin !*

*Kadar piya jinka tum chahale te  
jahanu kon des gayi"*

You say — 'My eyes are searching for you, but alas do not find you anywhere'. Well, my dear Kadar, I do not know to which land she has gone away — she whom you wanted.

Another maiden complains of the enmity of her eyes that are responsible for the collision and getting the heart involved and fatally wounded for no fault of its.

*Mori akhiyon ne bair kiya desomose  
Kadar Piya !*

*Aap larta aur mankaa phasaavat,  
inhi kaaran ghayal both jiya !!*



## RURAL PANORAMA

Hereunder is a typical Thumri in Paraj having for its theme the village well, where a maiden is painted in all colours of feminine purity and caprice of dalliance, threatening Kadar for his impertinence. Kadar, however, is relishing it all.

*Me ko roko naahi panghat pe jaane do  
Kahe kart ho tthatthori mose,  
aisi naahi*

*Hu me bholi jaanat hu tumri  
ghatiyan sagari*

*Apne gaanki mose karat ho batiyan  
Chalo hato, achra choro to maika !  
Ber ber karat cher aiso ttheet Kadar  
Tumhen naahi kaahoo ko dar, rahe ko  
chin leth gagar,  
Bhala todo to !!*

Such Thumris cannot be translated. It is an example where three languages have combined in one synthetic whole — the language of music, of poetry, and of dance or gesture, and the fantasy has taken a flight with all its twists and turns and the shifting panorama of colour.

*(To be concluded)*

## Classical Dance Parampara Oral and Textual—A Seminar

By

INDU RAMAN

I had the opportunity to attend two seminars in March this year. One was a symposium on classical dance traditions and the other was a literary colloquium. Conducted at university level, both had participants from outside Bombay. There the similarity ends. Whereas the one had the inevitable late starts and rambling speakers, the other was punctual, smooth sailing and intellectually stimulating. But conducting a dance seminar with constituents as polymorphic as Indian dance is by itself a Himalayan task.

Nalanda has conducted several such events successfully, but has always been dogged by last minute absenteeism of stars who are billed to appear. This time it was Birju Maharaj, Kelucharan Mohapatra and K. N. Panikker, who were substituted with Dr. Kumkum Mohanty and Dr. Ashok Ranade.

Dr. Mohanty, an accomplished exponent and Head of the Odissi Dance Centre, Bhubaneswar, lucidly explained the role science and technology are playing to preserve tradition. Her text, the *Odissi Path Finder*, details the units of body movements to serve as a memory aid for posterity. It was Kumkum's contention that the delicate nuances and special Hastas which the Maharis and Gotipuas introduce in their dance are vanishing along with their dwindling tribes.

However impressive and vast the technological facilities available today, the fact remains, we cannot capture art on celluloid. True, beautiful films are being made today, but was Satyajit Ray able to capture the magic of Bala on film? It remains a sterile experience, as it cannot make your heart throb the way her live concert could. We can savour a little of that special feeling today when we watch her daughter Lakshmi. The point I wish to make is that traditional artistes must be brought to teach as many students as possible. The art must be propagated fresh and not canned. There are greater chances then that art will survive in a truer form, while the texts are more likely to remain on dusty shelves.

Smt. Uma Rao (Head, Dept. of Dance, Telegu University, Hyderabad, went wide off the mark and focused on the present identity crisis that Kuchipudi seems to be facing. Her experience and erudition on the subject could have better channelised to describe the metamorphosis that this style has undergone from an all-male dance drama to a popular solo artform. To what extent has history, texts and practice warranted these changes? Practical demonstration by a student could have made the whole exercise more meaningful.

The Nalanda presentation was wholesome with correct proportions of audio-visuals, a talk and demonstration by students.



It would have been heartening if one had witnessed intelligent response and alert reaction to the posers that emerged during the proceedings. But one was dismayed with the general level of participation by bright young aspirants who are pursuing dance as career at Nalanda. The panel discussion held on the last day was chaired by Dr. Patlabhraman, who tried to bait them with provoking questions. Those who had harboured a glimmer of hope that the future of art will not be enslaved by texts but remain alive to reality were indeed a little disappointed.

It was Smt. Kalanidhi Narayanan's brilliant demonstration of music and dance that proclaimed, 'all's well!' Smt. Narayanan spoke of her strictly 'paramparic' upbringing which accepted the guru's word as final. She experienced a Rip Van Winkle syndrome when she returned after voluntary hibernation for several years. Simplicity had given way to intricacy and students had turned theoreticians. Therefore she had to take recourse to study texts to communicate better with her disciples. Literature comes in handy when the context of a Padam is to be understood.

True art transcends barriers of language or differences in style, says Kalanidhi, whose experience in skilful demonstration made great impact on the observers. Kalanidhi's sincerity and total involvement in her abhinaya shone with mellowed lustre that morning.

Dr. Nagaswamy's illustrated lecture on temple culture and its impact on costumes and aesthetics left a lasting impression on the mind. He implored the youngsters to seek inspiration from temple sculptures and traditional knowledge, and not books! Dr. Ashok Ranade's words were worth their weight in gold. These nuggets were delivered with the humility of an art lover, and without the arrogance of an academician. He cleared the ambiguous clouds that had gathered over the proceedings of the seminar by declaring that tradition does not justify the present. He appealed that young artistes must not become bogged down by the maze of theoretical analysis, but to embrace art in all its pristine purity.

Dance in post-Independent India has uncoiled like a multi-hooded Hydra, stemming from one body but claiming individuality at the same time. Study of texts, analysis, statistics, obscure terminology and a clinical approach is serving to kill our arts slowly, steadily but surely. There is no heart in the performances we see today, because the head monitors the study. There is temple of art, but where is the god? Perhaps it is the clash of modern values and cherished customs that confuse the new generation. Texts are the essential but skeletal foundation over which art is fashioned and likewise must remain implicit.

## AN EPITAPH TO GURUKULAVASA

(IN THE MOULD OF THOMAS GRAY)

Approach and read (for thou canst read) the lay  
Graved on the stone beneath you aged thorn.

### THE EPITAPH

Here rests its head upon the lap of Earth  
Gurukulavasa to History and Fame well-known.  
Fair Science extolled its virtues with warmth;  
But Melancholy has marked it now fully for her own.

Large was its bounty and its soul sincere;  
It gave to heritage all it had, to admire.  
No further seek its merits from its forgotten abode.  
There it reposes in the bosom of its originator, God.

### THE PAST :

That is the elegy written on Gurukulavasa, a system of hoary antiquity that was unique to India. It held aloft the torch of education, art and science for many a millenium. The ample pages of knowledge swelled the notes of praise of that incomparable institution and impregnated it with Celestial Fire. Hands, that the rod of empire had swayed or waked to ecstasy the living lyre, many a gem of purest ray serene, many a flower that blushed to the gaze of history, Ekalaivas with dauntless breast, Pandavas with growing virtues, Kauravas with crimes confined, Muse's flame held aloft — such glories and virtues adorned the institution and it commanded the applause of listening senates and scattered its blessings in plenty.

Sampradaya or tradition in music has been handed down through centuries of experience, research and knowledge. The homes of Tyagaraja, Maha Vaidyanatha Ayyar, Vina Kuppayyar of Tiruvoltiyur and Bidaram Krishnappa pulsated with scores of disciples well-fed,

dressed and tutored. The master gave them all he had and unrolled to them the ample pages of knowledge rich with the spoils of time. The disciple served his master as a dutiful member of the master's household bound by reason, respect and receptivity, honourable to himself and acceptable to the preceptor. He followed the teacher to functions, seminars and concerts, got ample exposure and experience and finally emerged duly graduated in music, scriptures and the like adequately trained and copiously enriched.

The exchange of knowledge and experiences was thus intimate, comprehensive and total. It is not feasible under any other system since 'no amount of analysis of its petals and pollens can help to give one a perfect picture of the flower'. It could only be the story of the elephant and the blind men. Gurukulavasa alone had the innate strength and capability to expose to the gaze of the disciple the full flower with its undiminished fragrance and the full elephant with all its features — in other words, the Lakshya and the Lakshana of Music, the Theory and the Practical.



Not only that, the Preceptor too had, perforce, to live up to his role, status and image. It was a two-way interaction.

Gurukulavasa had the advantages of *Samskaram*, *Sangham* and *Patam*. It is because of this wonderful merit, the system flourished. Sri Rama and his brothers, the Pandavas, the Kauravas and all who contributed to the illustrious annals of Bharath had enjoyed its fruits. Even the demon-king Hiranyakasipu sent his son, Prahalada, to have gurukulavasa, since the institution of gurukulavasa was gold with fragrance (*swarna pushpa sugantham-Ponn malar natramudaithu*).

#### THE PRESENT :

The World Wars, onset of Neomodernism, universalisation of Arts subjected to pulls and trends without reference to *arhata* (deservedness) or *adhikara* (inherent capacity), pressure of population and the advent of commercial trends set in motion a situation in which gurukulavasa became an anachronism. As B. C. Deva says :

"Music schools flourish, there are tuition classes, examinations and guide books, 'the sitar in three easy lessons' and 'how to make your voice to tune' and so on."

Ancient Tamil adage said, "Plough deeper than extensively". The trend here is the opposite. The main causes which stifled and asphyxiated the system include :

- influx of unemployed, underemployed and casuals into the Art prompted by the only urge to be active, kill idle time;
- urge to know 'something' of 'everything';
- proliferation and unbridled growth of institutions and teachers to cater to any demand, taste and category;
- urbanisation (with artistes migrating to towns) militating against continuance of gurukulavasa and

v. undermining classicism by cinema, light and neoclassical music.

Music lost its rural moorings and orientation. No more villages like Tiruvaiyaru, Vaiyacheri, Umayalpuram, Tirukodikaval, Konerirajapuram or Sembanarkoil can hope to cradle music as before. Karnatak music — any classical art — needs artistic sustenance, inspiration and peaceful atmosphere which only Nature in rural area can provide in abundance.

Urban tension based on constraints of space, distance, travel, expense, mode of living and above all, the utter impossibility of keeping boys and girls in the homes of preceptors sounded the deathknell to the system. There can no more be gurukulavasa in the changed atmosphere, as before for a

- Wallajahpet Venkataramana Bhagavathar for 26 years.
- Madurai Krishnan for 17 years
- Chowdiah for 16 years
- Palladam Sanjeeva Rao for 7 years or a
- T. K. Murthy being nursed from cradle to concert.

Few masters will tolerate and few pupils will accept such pedestrian approach now.

Tiger Varadachariar said it correctly. "We cannot make the stream run back but must take it as it runs." (Of course, boys still prefer tuitions at homes while girls prefer institutional coaching generally.)

Gurukulavasa is dead. Hence, the Epitaph, as it is an impracticable concept and as

'E'en from the tomb the voice of Gurukulavasa cries, E'en in Ashes live its wonted Fires.'

N. Rajagopalan  
— Courtesy : A Garland

From A Rasika's Diary

## MEMORIES MELODIOUS

(SHANMUKHA intends publishing from time to time memorable anecdotes and events about veterans who strode the Karnatak scene. We start with those of SANGEETHA BHOOPATHI SRI MAHARAJAPURAM VISHWANATHA IYER compiled by M. SUNDARESAN — Ed.)

Maharajapuram was a veteran musician. He was hailed as a 'junior' Pushpavanam even when he was young. This 'vidwat sampat' he imbibed from his father and later inherited from his gurukulavasam with Pazhamaneri Swaminatha Iyer and Ghatam Rangappa Iyer. His music was scientific, breezy and flashy. Rendered artistically with aesthetic appeal and arithmetically accurate *laya prayogas*, his music was on a sweet pattern.

#### JUNIOR AMONG SENIORS

His countenance was even cheerful and personality totally royal. Senior stalwarts like Malakkottai Sri Govindasami Pillai (violin), Azhaganambi Pillai (Mridangam) and Pudukkottai Dakshinamoorthy Pillai (Kanjira) were his accompanists even at the commencement of his concert career. He was junior among seniors at the times of (Poochi) Ramanathapuram Srinivasa Iyengar (Guru of Aryakudi), but he got himself endeared to all. This affable quality got him an opportunity to participate in Tiruvisanallur Sridhara Ayyaval's Festival, a place reserved only for senior stalwarts, conducted annually those days by Vikatam Sri Ramaswami Sastri.

Maharajapuram would engross himself totally in musical moods. At times he would forget a line or two of the

sahitya. Veteran accompanist Azhaganambi had once helped by playing on the mridangam the appropriate rhythmic sounds of the musical notes of the forgotten lines, and Maharajapuram continued. Such was the understanding among the artists' team and the éclat of artist-audience rapport.

Maharajapuram's voice might have failed or he might not have been in mood, maybe in a concert or two. But if one concert had clicked with full artist-audience rapport and environment, it would make such a "record hit" that it would "erase out of memory" for a while the excellent concert experience of the audience of other distinguished musicians heard by them for the month or the season. Veteran performing musicians have acknowledged this factor and the discerning Sangeetha rasikas have similarly expressed themselves.

#### UNIQUE BANI

His Raga alapanas, niravals and manodharma kalpana swaras would all come in a flow like 'Mandakini'. Notably Ragas Arabhi, Atana, Ahiri, Bageshwari, Bilahari, Darbar, Darbari-Kanada, Hamsanandhi, Khamas, Kapi, Kedaragowla, Mohanam, Mukhari, Nayaki, Poorikalyani and Varali would all



come ever dancing to his tunes. In whatever ragas he handled, one could see the stamp and substance of Maharajapuram Bani. He alone would be able to render so aesthetically and effortlessly.

the violinist, his sawal-jawab response from Murthy was a rare example for listeners' concert experience. Among the audience was Tanjavur Krishna Bhagavathar who was the senior most respected musician in Bombay. He was in the lead with his spontaneous 'Sabaash' from rasikas.

My most unforgettable experience of Maharajapuram, the majestic musician and his art, I had the next day. He had shared with some of us his concert experience and of the trials and trauma of concert engagements. He was happy and expressed total satisfaction about the earlier day's performance. Maharajapuram inter-laced his observations with witty humour.

The famous Bal Gandharva and Maharajapuram both received the Presidential Award in 1955. The common factor for them was music but the barrier for conversation was language! Maharajapuram was one-up. He sang for Bal Gandharva a popular musical Marathi hit so perfectly that the maestro himself was awed and astonished at Maharajapuram's marvel of excellence of his own composition!

#### AT THE 'CENTRE OF STAGE'

Maharajapuram's devotional surrender to Saint-composer Tyagaraja was total. His esteem towards his Vidya Gurus was so high that he would become emotional in any context of reference to them. Maharajapuram's music, was full of melody and brilliance. With an exemplary laya excellence which would come like sparks from the anvil, Maharajapuram's Bani and style

perhaps prompted the genius 'Kalki' to think of an appropriate title for him: Sangeetha Bhoopathy Maharajapuram was totally royal in his life and mission, as a king of music at the 'centre of the stage'.

Among several vidwans and rasikas like Karaikudi Sambasiva Iyer present at Maharajapuram's concert at Kalakshetra, Madras, was Mysore Vasudevachar. In the day's brilliant concert was included his composition in *Khamas Brochevarevarura*. Maharajapuram built the edifice by giving breezy and flashy touches of vivacious and scintillating patterns, unfolding the aesthetic beauty of the composition and artistic appeal of the raga bhava and lakshana. The composer was spiritedly moved with ecstasy. Smt. Rukmani Devi sensing the sentiment of the audience going equally ecstatic as the composer admirably managed to request Vasudevachar to say a few words about Maharajapuram and his Music. Vasudevachar spoke, overwhelmed with emotion. Likening his composition to that of a poor girl given in marriage, years ago to a bridegroom, he said that when he heard his own composition *Brochevarevarura* from Maharajapuram this time, he could not believe that it was the same girl who had come to meet her poor father after a long period of years as a *sarvaalankara bhu-shithai* i.e., as a lady totally transformed, decked with glittering jewellery of aesthetic grandeur and artistic excellence and whom he could not for a moment, identity at all. Vasudevachar profoundly expressed his feelings of joy and ecstasy of the masterliness of Music and the majesty of the style of Maharajapuram. Then what? A thunderous applause.

(Narrated by M. D. Ramanathan)

#### RARE COMBINATION OF RICH VIRTUOSI

It was the Tyagaraja Aradhana function got off by Tyagaraja Vidwat Samajam in Madras. Chembai, Maharajapuram and many vidwans and rasikas had assembled. Flute T. R. Mahalingam made his appearance. Chembai asked Mali whether he would play? Mali said 'yes'. Chembai volunteered to play the violin. 'Certainly', agreed Mali. Maharajapuram intercepted and said that for his part he would play the Mridangam. And that was an unforgettable experience of a rare combination of rich virtuosi who gave a full concert. A photograph taken on the occasion is displayed in the Vidwat Samajam Office.

(Narrated by Chembai himself)

Maharajapuram had acted in Tamil Cinema too. I remember having seen *Nandanar*, a Tamil devotional film, over fifty years ago, and the music notes of Mohanam and Kedaragowla of two songs got registered in my memory. They made me eagerly await Maharajapuram's handling them, elaborately in many concerts of his which I had the good fortune to attend. *Kanakanaruchira* — Tyagaraja's Varali Pancharatnam and the Saint's *Marubalga* — (Sriranjani) and *Ksheenamai* (Mukhari), *Sri Rajagopala* (Saveri) of Muthuswami Dikshitar and the *Krishna Karnamita sloka 'Shrutva Gunaan'* in Ragamalika are some of his old listeners' favourite delights.

One enthusiast came and greeting Maharajapuram said that he was happy to know about Maharajapuram's arrival by air (just a rumour the poor fellow heard and was eager to know



since when he became a *plane-man*. Maharajapuram calmly replied that he was ever a *plain-man*. The stupid enthusiast asked further whether it was his first flight experience! Maharajapuram said that it was his last experience. The humour was so subtle that it took time, except for some of us, for the eager visitor and others assembled to realise when Maharajapuram replied that he was always at the 'Centre of the stage'. That in itself was an adequate testimony that he was a *plain-man* and never a *plane-man*!

Maharajapuram was generous, serious and humorous. One Kodavasal Rangaswami Iyengar, an admirer, out of sheer over-enthusiasm greeting in friendly indulgence said: "Besh! Vishwanathapuram Maharaja Iyer." Quick was the retort by Maharajapuram:

"Besh! Rangavasal Kodaswami Iyengar, shreshtrasika!"

One music enthusiast asked Maharajapuram about Tiruvaiyaru festival that year and especially the winter. Maharajapuram replied the festival was *par excellence* but the winter was *Sani Pani* (sa ni pa ni), more virulent!

The immortal melodies of the great Maharajapuram can be cherished better if efforts are made to collect and release in audio-cassettes, his music still happily available with a few people, his own family members including, as private collections. This noble task can be undertaken by the Maharajapuram Vishwanatha Iyer Memorial Trust. Besides serving a great purpose of immortalising the great maestro, this activity, undertaken by the Trust, will create an *epoch* by establishing the continuity of tradition in modernity.

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## CULTURAL SCENE IN BOMBAY

The spirit of Aradhana always pervades the month of January. So was it with Shanmukhananda. Commencing with the Aradhana of the saint-bard of Tiruvayyaru, Sri Tyagaraja, the Sabha paid homage to Sri Syama Sastri and Sri Purandaradasa too. Apart from a well-co-ordinated rendition of the Pancharatnas in the morning on the Bahula Panchami day, the evening concerts by students and musicians of the city brought to fore many a promising talent, in vocal and instrumental.

During the month, the Sabha had organised a fund-raising show of *Jai Durga* of Hema Malini and troupe, at the Nehru Centre, one which had its premiere at the Shanmukhananda Hall during its Silver Jubilee Year. The 53rd show of the same dance-drama was to be for the very same hall's restoration efforts after the tragic fire accident. However, after more than half-a-century 'runs', the live ballet still retained its lustre and appeal. The team-spirit, the involvement of the individual artistes, besides the Hi-tech devices in musical compositions and playback rendition went a long way in keeping up its performing gusto and glitter.

If Hema Malini carried the day with her usual histrionics and ease, it was Shivbushan Lokhande who excelled the others with his indepth characterisation of Shiva. The choreographer of the ballet put his heart and soul into the depictions and Tandava stances. Over all the dancers in a blend of classical and folk-dance stances performed in gay abandon letting the show flow on with no dull moment. The show was

sponsored by Nagarjuna Fertilisers and Chemicals.

The enchantment that usually marks flautist N. Ramani's soulful style was somewhat missing this time in his programme for the Sabha in early February. Yet he compensated it by entertaining with his mastery over the technique.

After the opening Varnam, *Vatapi* (Hamsadhwani), Sri Raga Pancharatnam, and his all-time favourite *Entamuddo Entasogaso* (Bindumalini), Ramani struck a rapport with Vilambam the suave Ritigowla and *Janani* required. Confining the two major Ragas of the concert, Kambhoji and Shanmukhapriya to their quintessence, picturing in felicitous coherence the flautist embarked on a 'Kanakku'-phased Swara-prastharas for *Oh Rangasayi* in the former and the Ragam-Tanam-Pallavi in the latter. And both Ramani and Rukmini (Violin), who too was a shade off-colour that day, brightened up in the Ragamalika Swaras for the RTP.

Young Balaji of Bombay stole the show that day and with Vaikom Gopalakrishnan (Ghatam), he gave streamlined rhythmic variations of aesthetic strides.

Technical excellence and virtuosic indulgence seemed to have struck a dominant note in the city concerts, whether of top notchers or stars in the horizon. Not that it digressed in any way from concert tradition, but it only projected the concertcraft far too much highlighting entertainment facet as against elevating quality. Three in a row



could be cited as instances : T. R. Subramaniam of Delhi, the Hyderabad Brothers and Bangalore Vijayalakshmi.

TRS that day (at Bharatiya) was not in top form, voice-wise. Deploying his nasal power he steered the recital through his scientific approach and technical excellence, fatheornic the potentialities of the melodic framework and exploring the Sahitya nuances. Worthy of mention are his Kanada alapana and Kalyani Varadarajan's *Saptagireesam*, Tyagaraja's *Nanupaalimpa*, the Ranjani Ragam-Tanam-Pallavi in Khanda Triputa with Ragamalika Pada Vinyasa and Swaras stringing Sahana, Nilambari and Revathi and the Virutham.

Accompanying him were Sundarrajan of Akashwani, Delhi, a Violinist of mark TRS himself has carefully groomed, who played with confidence, reciprocating the main performer and K. V. Prasad (Mridangam) whose skill is in moulding to any stylist.

It was a concert of Vidwat and Vivahara that the Hyderabad Brothers, D. Raghava Chary and D. Sesha Chary gave to a fairly, large audience at the Pandal Cutcheri at the Gymkhana grounds for Shanmukhananda (April). Dueting with a harmonious blend of voice, both having a rich resonant timbre (the elder Raghava Chary using it with restraint while the younger Sesha Chary gives it a full rein that makes him dominate the scene), the brothers have ascended the concert stage with a bang, and have gained the audience full support. It is to be noted that a singing duo has come on the scene after a long gap after the Alathur Brothers.

They sing with gusto, with a feel for the Sahitya, their natural felicity in

*uchcharan* stemming from their mother-tongue Telugu. Their performing punch enthral the audience. The Brothers' Natai (*Ninne Bhajana*), Kannadagowla (*Sogasujooda tharama*), Mandari (*Paralokabhaya*), Kalavati (Okabaari jooda-garaadaa) and Devaranji (Namasthe) — two new finds in new hues — the grand-old Kharaharapriya (*Soumitri-bhagyame*) and Mohana (*Rara Rajeeva lochana Rama*) were all presented with artistic finery and aesthetic flourish. The alapanas built by both were refreshing. A little evocative touch with pause-laden phrasings would have gone a long way enhancing the Rasa. The Kanakku-swaras are 'in' thing and in a duet the brothers gave it a variation, one sticking to Kanakku, the other striding the Sarvalagu. Tanjore Ramdoss (Mridangam) and E. M. Subramaniam (Ghatam) elevated the quality by playing with restraint and resonance.

You may say that Bangalore Vijayalakshmi dedicated her NCPA recital to Dikshitar's Panchalinga Sthala Kritis. Besides which, there were a Daru Varnam and a couple of pieces from Muthiah Bhagavathar and Dasarnama. In the overall rendition one could discern the characteristics of Alathur Bani — the involvement, the intricacies and the technical spontaneity. A Sowkhyabhava with an accent on Vilambam would have added greater weight to it and reduced the fatigue the voice developed in the latter phase.

V. Mangala (Violin) and Sridhar Parthasarathy (Mridangam) the Bombay stars showed their promising skill accompanying her.

Sunday, the seventh of April was a memorable day in the annals of Shanmukhananda. Not only because a num-

ber of talents received the prizes and scholarships with blessings from the Octogenarian Vidwan, Sangita Bhushanam T. S. Krishnaswami, but it was the day of the little master Mandolin Srinivas too, who poured out his soul in the music he played.

No exaggeration, if one felt in his music the imploration to Lord Shanmukha to restore the burnt hall to its original glory. The substance of the selections, the melodies they are cast in, the sedate pace he chose to render them, the poignance he invested them with — all echoed the yearning.

Saveri, Sri, Sama, Jyotiswarupini, Madyamavati, Kapi, Yamuna Kalyani, Madhuvanti — all were poignant-oriented. Praying to the presiding deity Shanmukha (*Saravanabhava guha*) for Daya, Srinivas through his *Ganamudhapana* pleaded his brethrens to drink in the nectar and go about their task with *Santha. Endaro Mahanubhavulu!* An experience in which Kanyakumari added her own elegant sheen in sedate mood and K. V. Prasad (Mridangam) and E. M. Subramaniam (Ghatam) rose to lilting heights with soft-sedate strides.

*Nritya Ganga*, Bharata Natyam adapted to Hindustani music, is a brain child of Sucheta Chapekar, and she has been performing this for quite some years now. To see her in a traditional Bharata Natyam recital was a refreshing experience which one had in her performance for Shanmukhananda at the Indian Gymkhana grounds (Feb.) The Margam she wove through highlighted a variety of emotions and Nayika bhava, ranging from ecstatic bhakti to Vatsalya, and Virahotkhandita and Khandita. A Panchanadai Alarippu,

Shahaji's *Pahile Krishna* (Ananda Bhairavi) and Jakkini Daru in Tillana format, *Yallillam Yallam* (Bilahari) — which she presented in the December season at her demonstration at the Natyakala Conference, Madras — besides the Khamas Varnam *Samini Rammanave, Ethaikkandu* (Kalyani) and *Ramo Namu*, lullaby formed quite a weighty repertoire. Sant Ramadas' Ganesha Keertan, normally forming an overture in the Kalakshepa, with a Kavuthvam should have been assigned a place in the beginning and not in the mid-concert.

One found in Sowmya Subbaraman, a fine vocalist for dance. The Nattuvangam was by Sucheta's student, Smita Sathe.

The 10-year-old Naada Brahman which honours a Guru during its annual Tyagaraja Aradhana reached a new-high this year celebrating a 5-day Aradhana featuring celebrities like Trichy Swaminatha Iyer (this year's recipient of the honour), R. K. Srikantan and a fine vocalist Ramamani besides a nearly 16-hour Akandam and congregational singing of Pancharatnas.

The veterans Swaminatha Iyer's and Srikantan's concerts were experiences of vintage music. A teacher's teacher, Swaminatha Iyer's recital contained so much a student could benefit from. Despite his age, (he is 80 plus) and voice vagaries, his occasional brilliance, his surprising ease in the upper reaches and flashes of expertise stun you. In this age of Niraval-starved cutcheris, with Kanakku-filled Kalpanaswaras, this maestro still upholds the supremacy of Sarvalaghu, Sowkhyam of the slow pace and the flowing elegance of graceful gamakas. To which he adds spicy brikkas and flashes of Taan pat-



terns that accentuate the musical aesthetics. That evening's Shanmukha-priya is still ringing in one's ears. His own student K. Sivakumar accompanied him on the violin and veteran Trichy Raghava Iyer played on the Mridangam.

Srikantan is a rare artiste of multifaceted accomplishment. A fine musician with an assortment of Kritis and an array of Vaggeyakaras, an incisive receptivity to the song and sense and a perceptivity in presentation, this septuagenarian is a dedicated learner, a constant thinker, and a devoted teacher all rolled into one. He is a *melody karta* too, having tuned many a Dasar-

nama and Kannada Pada with an insight into its content and mood.

Srikantan's concert at Bhakta Rasika Ranjani Sabha, Anushaktinagar, in pure Ariyakudi Bani exuded vigour and vivacity, quintessence and quality. The voice was fine-tuned to the pitch and renditions were packed with crisp extemporisation.

Vasudevachar's *Lambodara* (Kambhoji), *Ninne Nammitinayya* (Simhendramadhyamam), *Bhajare* (Abheri), Jayachamaraja Wadiyar's *Kamalambike* (Natai) were some of the cream of Kritis he rendered.

— KINNARI

## NO 'ADULTERATION, PLEASE

While travelling in the suburban train, Madras one day, I was astonished to hear someone play a brilliant "Kanada". A haggard man was playing the flute and presented a picture of poverty. I spontaneously offered a twenty five paise coin, but the rare quality of his music lingered in my ears for a long time.

From that day, I became a regular commuter of the same train and I heard the flautist almost daily. For one thing, he had mastered the raga to such an extent that he could go on for hours; without a single repetitive phrase in his alapana.

One day I introduced myself as a rasika and picked up a conversation with him. He would vividly describe his long hours of tutelage under the late Mahavidwan Ramana Bhagavathar and the quirk of circumstances that had decreed him to beg for his livelihood. I was impressed by his sense of commitment to his master and was waiting for an opportunity to help him.

And then it came. An organiser of a music circle approached me with a request for my performance on the occasion of their anniversary. On that particular day, I was scheduled to leave on a month-long official tour and I had even booked my ticket. Just as I was about to express my inability to perform, a sudden flash occurred. I spoke to the organiser about the train flautist and after much persuasion fixed up a slot for him.

One day, after I returned, I boarded the suburban train. Suddenly I heard the good-old familiar Kanada! There I saw my friend, the beggar, delineating its splendour oblivious of the world around. I rushed to him and asked him why he was still begging. The flautist gave me a weary smile "Sir, you appreciate my music — for that I am grateful to you. Those people want me to render songs I haven't quite heard. Worse still, a part of the audience was constantly looking for film songs. No, Sir, I cannot adulterate my music at any cost. It is a sacrilege! Here I play His music and people willingly offer me something which I accept as a token of their respect to the art, more than anything else!

Surya (Dhwani)

## MANGALAM AND MADYAMAVATI

So much has gone into the accepted norms of musical practice that hardly anyone pauses to ponder over their whats and whys — Mangalam and Madyamavati, for instance.

It is a well-known factor that Mangalam is a song-salutation that is usually sung at the conclusion of music or dance concerts, dance dramas, operas, kalakshepas etc. "It is a composition in the kirtana form and consists of a Pallavi and a number of Charanas, the Charanas being sung to the same tune," says Prof. P. Sambamoorthy in his *Dictionary of South Indian Music and Musicians*. There is an exception also in a composition of Mangalam in Tyagaraja's *Nowka Charitram*, *Maakulamuna* where the composition has an Anupallavi. The Mangalams are in various languages, such as Kannada, Tamil, Telugu, Sanskrit etc., and are usually composed in auspicious Ragas like Dhanyasi, Asaveri, Mangala Kaisiki, Vasanta, Saurashtra, Ghanta, Sriraga, Suruti, Mohana, Yadukulakambhoji, Pantuvarali and Madyamavati.

However even when Mangalams in the foregoing Ragas are sung at the conclusion of a recital, it is followed by at least an alapana sequence of Madyamavati, as a concluding mark. The reason for this may be traced in Prof. Sambamoorthy's *Dictionary* where he observes that the ancient, auspicious Raga, Madhyamavati is "the Rishabha Murchana of the Mohana raga ... This raga takes the first 3 notes of the cycle of fifths, Sa, Pa and Chatusruti Rishabha and the first 3 notes of the cycle of fourths, Sa, Ma, and Kaisiki Nishada. Hence the raga has a high degree of concordance. All the evil effects that accrue by singing ragas outside their *gaana kaala* are neutralised by sing-

ing a brief alapana of Madyamavati towards the close of concert, opera, dance drama, bhajana or kalakshepa." Interestingly, Madyamavati's time of rendition (*Gaana Kaala*) is noontime!

The Music Circle, Srirangam, comprising musicians, musicologists, teachers and connoisseurs, a compact organisation, which has been carrying on research-oriented discussions, deliberations and lecture-demonstrations had devoted one of its sessions to Mangalam and the following is the gist of the discussion that took place: Speaking on the subject Dr. K. N. Shrinivasan, the Director of the Music Circle, suggested a three-fold division of the topics: (i) why Mangalam should be sung; (ii) when it should be sung; and (iii) the contribution of great composers thereto.

Tracing the etymological import of the word Mangalam, Shrinivasan said, that 'Mangalam' implies a song beseeching the gods to shower goodness comprising three factors — *Hitam*, *Priyam* and *Subham*. Mahalakshmi is said to be the abode of all such goodness; she is called Mangalalaya and Mangala devata. The turmeric known in Sanskrit as *Mangalaprada* (Whence the Tamil word '*manjal*') is her favourite. Her attire, favourites — these account for the colour yellow being considered as most auspicious. Goddess Parvathi is also called Sarva-mangala.

Though every piece of pious music is a mangalam, the epithet 'mangalam' is usually assigned to certain compositions of benedictory import. Mangalam can be sung at any stage, in the beginning, in the middle or the end; but traditionally the word mangalam is associated with songs rendered in conclusion.



The word Thodayamangalam only means, an invocatory song rendered at the conclusion of any part of a programme like the part preceding the singing of Ashtapadis in bhajana.

Mangalam can be sung in any raga, the rasa of which sounds like returning to Vilayasthana or abode of peace. Four ragas traditionally considered best for mangalam (in the descending order) are Madhyamavati, Surati, Sowrashtram and Vasantha. The seventh to tenth charanas of the Dasavatara Ragamalika have been set by Sri Dikshitar in these ragas in the reverse order culminating in Madhyamavati.

Even where the mangalam is not set in Madhyamavati, usually the musician renders a sloka or a short alapana of Madhyamavati, after such mangalam. This is because of the traditional belief that singing Madhyamavati will cure the

defects of singing of many ragas at times unfit for their singing. After explaining the reasons for such acceptance, the speaker pointed out that the 'Mangala-Kausiki' was once considered a principal raga for singing mangalam; later it became Mangala-Kausika and then the raga receded to the background with its phrases passing into Sowrashtra.

He pointed out that many pieces of mangalam are in Khanda Chapu Tala because of the syllabic content of the word 'mangalam'. A question whether the mangalam piece could be sung in Madhyama Sruthi was discussed and the consensus was that it should be followed by a passage in another mangala raga in original Sruthi and Madhyamavathi could be most suited for this.

Available classical Mangalam compositions are :

1. Madhava bhavatu the	Panthurvarali	
2. Mangalam Avani sutra	(anon)	
3. Bhujaga sayina	Nadanamakriya	Tyagaraja
4. Karunarasakshaya	Yadukula Kambhoji	Swati Tirunal
5. Ramachandraya	Ghanta	Tyagaraja
6. Sri Krishna mangalam		Bhadrachala Ramadas
Raghurama mangalam		
7. Sathatham Kuru mangalam	Vasantha	
8. Mangalam Jaya mangalam	Vasantha	Dikshithar
9. Janaki Nayakuniki	Danyasi	
10. Navaneethachoraya	Ghanta	(Tarangam)

The speaker referred to certain other pieces of Mangalam — in Mohanam, at the end of *Prahlada Bhakti Vijayam* and Surati at the end of *Nowka Charitham* and two pieces of Nerur Srinivasacharya. Saint Tyagaraja's *Sishya parampara* retained his compositions and did not themselves compose pieces for mangalam. He also referred to a Dasavatara Ragamalika in Sanskrit in Bilahari raga as a piece of mangalam.

Sri Ulaganatha Pillai sang *Parvathi vibhuniki mangalam* and the *Ulagellam Unarndu* or *Periyapuranam* sung in Natya sampradaya and explained their significance.

Prof. Anantaraman quoted slokas from Valmiki and others, and showed that the purpose of mangalam is to invoke Goddess Mahalakshmi and along with her serve the Feet of Sriman Narayana.

## A TRIBUTE

### AN ETERNAL STUDENT

At the dawn of the New Year D. K. Jayaraman was conferred the prestigious Sangita Kalanidhi by the Music Academy, Madras. (In its January, 1991 issue SHANMUKHA carried excerpts of his presidential address at the 64th Music Conference.) But before the month came to a close, the life of the 'Kalanidhi' came to an end. So sudden was the turn that the shocked music world has not yet come out of its grief.

DKJ, as he was known to the music world, suffered from physical ailments but Nature bestowed on him in compensation an incomparable musical acumen. He was, as a scribe aptly described, "the greatest single contribution of D. K. Pattammal to Carnatic music." And the echo of this could be heard in his sister Pattammal's words when she recalled her brother's accomplishments speaking to a cultural correspondent :

Our house in Kancheepuram was always filled with song when I was young. My father would teach us devotional verses in Sanskrit and Tamil. My elder brother was a good singer and I was constantly practising classical music. And yet one day I was surprised to find my youngest brother Jayaraman, humming a whole kriti along with me. He even followed me through an alapana, he seemed to know the raga contours very well. You can imagine how pleased my family was at this discovery of talent in a boy barely four years old. My mother said at once, "Wait and see! He will be so successful as to maintain an elephant in his backyard."

I felt it was my responsibility to train him seriously in music. But he was still only a child and often our lessons would terminate abruptly when the pupil got up and ran off to play with his friends. I would chide him later for disappearing with the kriti half-learned. Undaunted, with mischief dancing in his eyes, he would ask, "Shall I sing the rest of it for you now?" Believe it or not, he would render the charanam as accurately as if I had taught it to him! My father's eyes would moisten at that, my mother would be thrilled. As their last born, he was the darling of the whole family.

Sure, as the younger brother of Pattammal, DKJ owed everything in music right from 'learning to performing' to her. He came into the limelight first as her co-singer and then branched off on his own. He never fought shy of acknowledging his sister as his guru, although he carved a performing style of his own retaining the weight, the authenticity of *puatanthara* and the clarity of diction so uniquely attributed to Pattammal. It was his spirited verve and vigour that added a sparkle all its own and made it different from the placid style of his sister.



Also the *vivahara*, the technical jaunts that he infused into the musical fabric brought into his rendition, a thrill and a greater entertainment potential. However, with the power and pliancy that his voice displayed, everything came off spontaneously with a *sowkhyabhava*. In fact *bhava* was dominant in his style as in his sister's too.

The feel of the melody, the lilt of the rhythm and the core of the lyrics i.e., the emotion that the *sahitya* evoked were all there in his music. So deep was his involvement with the musical enunciation that communication, where he mingled technique with imagination, came so easily and naturally to him. It was unique in its own way, his sister remarked, "and all withing the firm frontiers of the somewhat rigid formal structure of the Kanchipuram tradition. Here, even the terminal point of a kriti cannot be left to individual will, but has a Paddhati, a handed-down method to it."

It was all the result of the intense learning and listening, DKJ himself had once acknowledged. More so when learning from composers themselves or from their senior *sishyas*.

One such composer of eminence from whom DKJ had the pleasure of learning at the age of eight, was Papanasam Sivan. And, through the decades till the great doyen passed away in 1973 it was a long process of learning. Together with his sister, DKJ became one of the pioneers, propagating Sivan's compositions.

He had the fortune of learning directly from another composer, Koteeswara Iyer who was adept in rare ragas and did a string of *kritis* in the 72-melakarta ragas. DKJ was a learner throughout and his repertoire was vast, comprising all varieties of compositions from the pre-Trinity era to those of recent times such as Sankara Iyer, Srivatsa, Venugopal and others.

The *Ranjani Ragamala*, *Karthikeya* (Valaji), *Daيسانam Kandarku* (Mohanam), *Ma Mayura* (Bilahari), *Siva Ganga* (Punnagavarali), *Sri Krishnam Bhaja* (Todi), *Mapalavelasi* (Asaveri), *Mayamma* (Ahiri), *Nannu Brova* (Lalita), to mention only a handful — all got a new sheen in his musical handling.

DKJ's quest for musical inspiration continued till the end, reminisces one of his students. And anything he touched, he rendered, he imbued with new hitherto unperceived beauties and ornamentation. "Even two years earlier," the student recalls, "he had introduced a barely known raga Karnaranjani, setting a dazzling Chittaswara to Muthiah Shagavathar's kriti *Vanchatonuna*.

Little wonder his concerts had fresh pieces each time, either composed afresh or retrieved from a lost lot. And he could put his heart and

soul into them. After all one "need not have to do stunts or resort to gimmicks to elevate and at the same time entertain" he had observed once in an interview. "You can't get away with galatta music, very few like it ... you can still win over a large gathering by applying yourself wholly to music, singing with raga bhava, sahitya understanding and with right accent and diction without any *padacheda*", he added. That he was following this maxim can be vouched for from a number of successful concerts he had given in Bombay.

One could learn, as it were, the song from his concert rendition, take down notations of *sangathis* and *sahitya* and benefit from his improvisations of *niraval* and *swaras*. Clarity was the core of his music. One could also perceive the distinct aesthetic and evocative touches of DKJ. He was one of the very few accomplished performers who were successful teachers too. Entering the portals of the DKJ school is like entering the "royal path to chaste music and a successful music career" says DKJ's senior student Vijaya Siva. "He built a new and broader way of teaching in an atmosphere of profound warmth and comfort." The two sterling qualities as a teacher were that he let his chelas cultivate their own style. Guidelines were only to a certain extent, "till the student fell in line with the tenets," then started a challenging "self introspection and self improvement". And, he never stopped his students from listening to other schools and expanding their vision. He invariably attended his students' cutcheris and critically analysed their performances. Quite a gesture, to help a bud blossom.

Though coveted honours such as the Central Sangeet Natak Akademi award, Sangita Choodamani, (Krishna Gana Sabha), Kalaimamani, (Tamil Nadu Government) and the Sangita Kalanidhi came his way, the best he would have cherished were the endearing *Isai Tambi* (younger brother) that he earned as a nine-year-old lad from "the Nagaswaram wizard. T.N. Rajaratnam Pillai, and the *Nada Brahman* from Papanasam Sivan, the Tamil Tyagaraja.

— Compiled by Sulochana Rajendran





## A KARMAYOGI

"To those old-time connoisseurs of Hindustani music who always looked for what is intellectual, subtle and beautiful in Hindustani music, the death of Pandit Wamanrao Sadolikar comes as a truly grievous loss," says the veteran critic, Mohan Nadkarni in a tribute to the maestro.

The name of Sadolikar conjures up vision of the fine representation of Atrauli-Jaipur Gharana, the enrichment of Marathi musical plays, and the steady and sure rise of his daughter Shruti to the top, in performing forum. At 84, if he was reported to have recorded a 7-hour long autobiographical sketch for Akashwani, one could assess the endurance, the dedication, the discipline and the passion this Karmayogi had for the art of music.

A school drop-out though, Pt. Wamanrao Sadolikar's involvement in performing arts was a "parental inheritance." Father was a sitarist and mother's sweet music enveloped the household with songs of the Saints. His musical instincts and innate talent got moulded at the hands of two stalwarts who stood for two great progressive streams sweeping the musical scene then, in the early twenties : (1) the great evangelist and musical missionary Pandit Vishu Digambar Paluskar whose Gandharva Mahavidyalaya Sadolikar became a student of; and (2) Ustad Alladiya Khan of the Atrauli-Jaipur Gharana. Having thus 'equipped' himself with 'Parampara' grooming and performing stints, and with a voice sonorous and reaching power, it was not unnatural for Sadolikar to embark on an ambitious career of actor-singer and classical vocalist. In the busy schedule that he was enveloped with he did not neglect his teaching instincts, (the large number of his performing disciples vouch for this) and his creative impulse of scoring music for Marathi plays. The musicals, *Shakuntal*, *Saubhadra*, *Sharada* and *Swayamwar* would remain ever fresh in his fans' memory.

An unusual occurrence of a Taanpura vibrating on its own with the resonance of a human voice, only brings home this maestro's conviction in the power of true music. Narrating the experiment the master once conducted in her house, his disciple Sushila Rani Patel says :

"He (Sadolikar) tuned his Taanpura with utmost care and placed it carefully against the wall .... Facing the Taanpura, he began with leisurely alap. The soft notes of Brindaban Sarang soon filled the air for over half-an-hour. And you could see and hear the Taanpura wires vibrating with the resonance of his voice :"

Awards at the national level may not have decorated him. But he won the coveted Bal Gandharva gold medal, and also recognition from Maharashtra Government during Centenary Celebrations of the Marathi musical theatre. The Sangeet Research Academy honoured him with a fellowship. But awards or no awards, the Karmayogi pursued in his chosen path.

R.S.

## "A MUSICIAN BORN ON THE STREET"

Aaron Copland, an erudite composer, the greatest during this century, in the American musical scene, passed away early December at ten short of a century. He was a multifaceted genius, a conductor of merit, an excellent lecturer, a devoted teacher. His works on music, both books and compositions attracted laymen to music. He was as much receptive to classical music as he was appreciative of the modern. And as one who strode the scene as a scholar-composer-conductor-teacher he was considered as one of the authorities on Western music. His book *What to Listen For in Music* is a veritable guide to serious learners and listeners of music.

"Whether you listen to Mozart or Duke Ellington, Aaron Copland's provocative suggestions for listening to music from the composer's point of view will bring you a deeper appreciation of the most rewarding of all art forms," observed a critic. He won the Pulitzer Prize in 1945 and the New York Music Critics' Award for the score of the ballet *Appalachian Spring*. His other famous compositions include the ballets *Billy the Kid* and *Rodeo*. His orchestral works of *El Salon Mexico*, *Lincoln Portrait* and *Quiet City* were quite popular. He had also contributed to film scores of *Our Town* and *The Heiress*.

Paying his tribute to the master-composer Parag Trivedi wrote in *Indian Express* :

To people who had just heard snatches of Aaron Copland's compositions on the Voice

of America, the 35 minute documentary that Bombay Doordarshan telecast in 1977 came as a treat. One could not only see the man compose, and see the scenes from some of his ballets, but one could also hear the man talk with the erudition that had made him the father figure for new American composers in the '60s and '70s.

Erudite the man certainly was. He had such a thirst for knowledge, he went through teachers like one goes through books. Born in a Russian-Jewish family, they had their name altered by an immigration officer who changed Kaplan to Copland. Aaron was the youngest of five children and the only one who was not to receive formal music training until he was thirteen. "I was born on a street in Brooklyn that can only be described as drab," he wrote in the autobiographical sketch *Composer from Brooklyn*. "I am filled with mild wonder each time I realise that a musician was born on the street."

This "man born on the street" had many firsts to perform. Overcoming inhibitions about learning under a woman teacher Copland became the first American student of Nadia Boulanger, the best teacher of Harmony, for whom he later on composed the *Symphony for Organ and Orchestra*, to perform at her American debut as an Organist. His *Copland On Music* is a pen-portrait of music and musicians with perceptivity, intelligence and candour. The 'portraits' of those who were closely associated with his musical life, such as Nadia Boulanger, his Harmony teacher, Serge Koussevitsky, a famous contemporary conductor, the pianist William Keppell, and his evaluation of Mozart



and Stravinsky as also the famous critic Paul Rosenfelt, are all charged with a warmth and emotion only an involved musician, a dispassionate one at that, could give expression to.

In a tribute, that we pay to the departed soul, it may only be pertinent to quote extracts of this great authority on a topic that is universal to the world of music, be it of West or East.

The chapter "From Composer to Interpreter to Listener" in his *What to Listen For in Music* is equally relevant to Indian musical milieu. To quote some extracts :

Practically considered, almost every musical situation implies three distinct factors : a composer, an interpreter, and a listener. They form a triumvirate, no part of which is complete without the other. Music begins with a composer; passes through the medium of an interpreter; and ends with you, the listener. Everything in music may be said, in the final analysis, to be directed at you — the listener. Therefore, to listen intelligently, you must clearly understand not only your own role but also that of composer and interpreter and what each one contributes to the sum total of a musical experience.

Let us begin with the composer, since music in our own civilization begins with him. What, after all, do we listen for when we listen to a composer? He need not tell us a story like the novelist; he need not "copy" nature like the sculptor; his work need have no immediate practical function like the architect's drawing. What is it that he gives us, then? Only one answer seems possible to me : He gives us himself ....

Always remember that when you listen to a composer's creation you are listening to a man, to a particular individual, with his own special personality. For a composer, to be of any value, must have his own personality. It may be of

greater or lesser importance, but, in the case of significant music, it will always mirror that personality .... The personality with which he was born and the influences of the time in which he lives. It is the interreaction of personality and period that results in the formation of a composer's style. Two composers with exactly similar personalities living in two different epochs would inevitably produce music of two different styles.

Perhaps this important question of musical style will be made clearer if applied to a specific case. Take Beethoven, for example. One of the most obvious characteristics of his style is its ruggedness. Beethoven, as a man, had the reputation of being a brusque and rugged individual. From the testimony of the music alone, however, we know him to be a composer with a bold, uncouth quality, the very antithesis of the suave and the mellifluous. Still, that rugged character of Beethoven's took on a different expression at different periods of his life. The ruggedness of the *First Symphony* is different from that of the *Ninth*. It is a difference of periods. The early Beethoven was rugged within the limits of an eighteenth-century classical manner, whereas the mature Beethoven underwent the influence of the liberating tendencies of the nineteenth century ....

#### THE ROLE OF INTERPRETER

If it is essential for the listener to understand the question of musical style as applied to a composer's work, it is even more so for the interpreter. For the interpreter is a kind of middleman in music. It is not so much the composer that the listener hears, as the interpreter's conception of the composer. ... The role of the interpreter leaves no room for argument. All are agreed that he exists to serve the composer — to assimilate and recreate the composer's "message." The theory is plain enough — it is its practical application that needs elucidation....

Interpretation is, to a large extent, a matter of emphasis. Every piece has an essential qua-

lity which the interpretation must not betray. It takes its quality from the nature of the music itself, which is derived from the personality of the composer himself and the period in which it was written. In other words, every composition has its own style which the interpreter must be faithful to. But every interpreter has his own personality, too, so that we hear the style of a piece as refracted by the personality of the interpreter.

The relation of the performer to the composition that he is recreating is therefore a delicate one.

.... You must become more aware of the interpreter's part in the performance you are hearing. To do that, two things are necessary: You must have, as point of reference, a more or less ideal conception of the style that is proper to the composer in question; and you must be able to sense to what degree the interpreter is reproducing that style, within the sphere of his own personality. However short any of us may fall from attaining this ideal in listening, it is well that we keep it in mind as an objective.

.... The combined efforts of composer and interpreter have meaning only in so far as they go out to an intelligent body of hearers. That bespeaks a responsibility on the part of the hearer. But before one can understand music, one must really love it. Above all things, composers and interpreters want listeners who lend themselves fully to the music that they are hearing.

Virgil Thomson once described the ideal listener as "a person who applauds vigorously." By that *bon mot* he means to imply, no doubt, that only a listener who really involves himself is of importance to music or the makers of music.

To lend oneself completely inevitably means, for one thing, the broadening of one's taste. It is insufficient to love music only in its more conventional aspects. Taste, like sensitivity, is, to a certain extent, an inborn quality, but both can be considerably developed by intelligent practice. That means listening to music of all schools and all periods, old and new, conservative and modern. It means unprejudiced listening in the best sense of the term.

Take seriously your responsibility as listener. All of us, professionals and laymen alike, are forever striving to make our understanding of the art more profound. You need to be no exception, no matter how modest your pretensions as listener may be. Since it is our combined reaction as listeners that most profoundly influences both the art of composition and interpretation, it may truthfully be said the future of music is in our hands.

Music can only be really alive when there are listeners who are really alive. To listen intently, to listen consciously, to listen with one's whole intelligence is the least we can do in the furtherance of an art that is one of the glories of mankind.

S.R.

## OBITUARY

We record with deep regret the passing away recently of Shri N. R. Krishnaswamy, who had been associated with our Sabha for many years as a Managing Committee Member, Hon. Treasurer and Hon. Secretary at different times, and of Shri R. Srinivasa Rao (R. S. Rao) who served as a Committee Member and Hon. Treasurer for some time.



## Concentration of Concerts during Music Season

Needed

Not Needed

The month of December is synonymous with an 'extravaganza of music' in Madras for music lovers all over the world. Many sabhas host at least three sessions of music concerts and demonstrations, a rare treat for the musical minded.

With the pressures of modern life, people are forced to leave their home land and seek greener pastures. Their chances of hearing live concerts are quite remote. Keeping the December season in mind, they take a holiday to Madras and are assured of a veritable musical treat. The interests of foreigners too are nurtured only through a series of concerts. If there was no concentration they would indeed be disappointed.

All leading artistes are put to their ultimate test only during the music season. This is because they have to perform in all leading sabhas, one after the other. Some performers have more than one concert a day. This hones the artistes's talent and virtuosity. For this he needs perseverance coupled with a wide knowledge of various compositions. Only a concentration of concerts can effectively test the ability of a performer to communicate with the audience. A single concert featuring different performers every weekend does not quite prove each artiste's versatility and such a system would not serve any purpose.

If there is a concentration of concerts rasikas would not be deprived of a chance to hear maestros like Trichy Sri Sankaran, Sri Vishwanathan, Dr. L. Subramaniam, etc., who have settled abroad, and constructive comparison between giants of the same discipline can be brought out.

So, from the point of view of both rasika and artiste the concentration of concerts in the music season is nothing less than a boon.

C. Seethapathy

There should not be a concentration of concerts during the music season. Over a dozen sabhas provide a sort of mela to attract the audience by arranging popular artistes, who lured by money accept concerts everywhere and make them a mechanical show. The spontaneous creativity based on the competence of the performer is lost resulting in a general feeling of disgust. The artistes should space their concerts so that they do not perform too frequently. With the emergence of sabhas and their so called aim of projecting/preserving Karnatak music, competition and survival has come to be the order of the day resulting in cheap marketing techniques which ultimately bring down quality.

If a vidwan accepts too many concerts during the season, he will have to keep his fingers crossed that his voice will not let him down. It is also a drain on his health, and towards the end of the festival he is likely to feel burnt out.

The ideal remedy would be to space the concerts over the whole year. "Too many cooks spoil the broth". Too many concerts at the same time really has an impact in decision making. A rasika does not know whose concert to attend.

The few music lovers who come from outstation go to their favourites, any way. What ultimately happens is that on any particular day there are some dozen people singing within a few hundred feet of each other, each drawing a meagre floating crowd, flitting from one hall to the other, trying to savour one kriti here, one alapana there, half a tani avartanam elsewhere. It's like having a mouthful at different eating places when all one wants is one solid meal. Neither is the rasika happy nor the vidwan. It's really a sad state of affairs.

Balaji & Narada  
— Courtsey : Dhvani

## பரத நாட்டியத்தில் சம்பிரதாயமும் சபாரஞ்சகமும்

திருவிடைமருதூர் கே. மஹாலிங்கம் பிள்ளை

நடனக்கலை, தொன்மையும், தூய்மையும், பெருமையும் வாய்ந்த ஓர் அழகிய கலை. முற்காலத்தில் பெரிதும் போற்றப்பட்டும், மதிக்கப்பட்டும் வந்த கலைகளுள் ஒன்று இந்த நடனக்கலை.

பரதம் என்பது பதினெட்டு வகைப்பட்டது. அதில் தற்போது நாட்டியம் ஆடுவதற்கு உகந்தது 'நந்தி பரதம்' தான். நாட்டியத்திற்குகந்ததாக 'நந்தி பரதம்' கருதப்படுவதற்குப் பல காரணங்கள் கூறப்படுகின்றன. என்றும் எப்பொழுதும் ஈசுவரனின் பக்கத்திலேயே இருந்து இறைவன் நடனத்தைப் பார்த்தவர் நந்தி என்பதும் அக்காரணங்களுள் ஒன்று. இக்காரணத்தை மேலும் வலியுறுத்தும் வகையில் அமைந்துள்ளது கீழ்வரும் ஸமஸ்கிருதச் செய்யுள் :

“சுலயாண சலவாஸாய  
கருணாஸ ஸிந்தவே  
நமோஸ்து நந்திகேசர்ய நாட்ய  
சாஸ்த்ரார்த் தாயதே”

இச் செய்யுளில் இந்திரன் நந்திகேசவரிடம் நாட்டிய சாஸ்திரத்திற்கு விளக்கம் கூறுமாறு வேண்டுகிறான். அதற்கு நந்திகேசுவரர் கீழ்வருமாறு பதில் அளித்தார்.

“நாட்யம் ந்ருத்தம், ந்ருத்யமிதி  
முநிபி! பரிகேர்த்திதம்  
நாட்யம் தந்நாடகச்  
சோயம், யோக்ய  
பூர்வகதாயுதம்”

தற்போதும் பரதத்தை நாட்டியம், ந்ருத்தம், ந்ருத்தியம் என்று மூன்று வகைப்படுத்தியுள்ளார்கள். தந்நாடகஸ்சோயம், யோக்ய பூர்வகதாயுதம், பிரஹ்லாத சரித்திரம், இரண்ய சரித்திரம் போன்ற புராண

சரித்திரங்கள் ஆடுவது 'நாட்டியம்' என்று குறிப்பிடப்படுகிறது. அடவுகள், ஜதி கோர்வைகள், தாள ஜதிபேதங்களுடன் கூடியதே 'ந்ருத்தம்' எனப்படுவது. பாவம், ரஸம், அடவுகள், ஜதி பேதங்கள் முதலியன பொருந்தியதே 'ந்ருத்தியம்' என்பதாகும். 'லாஸ்யம்' என்பது பாவங்களைப் பிடிப்பது, 'தாண்டவம்' என்பது நின்று ஆடுவது, இவை இரண்டும் அடங்கியதே 'நாட்டியமாகும்'.

### பக்தி தாண்டவம்

வேத சாஸ்திரப்படி ருக்வேத சாரம் வீணவேணு மிருதங்காதி சகல வாத்தியங்களுடனே ஆதிசக்தி சமேதராயாடியதாகும்.

### லாசிய தாண்டவம்

யஜுர் வேதசாரம் ஆங்கிகம் வாசிகம் ஆகாரியம் சாத்வீக மின்னஞ்சுவித அபிநயங்களுடனே பராசக்தி சமேதராயாடியதாகும்.

### உத்தான தாண்டவம்

சாம வேதசாரம் ஸரிகம்பதநி ஸப்தஸ்வரங்களுக்கு உபாங்கமாகிய த-தி-தொம்-நம் கிடதக-தரிகிண-தரிசு ஜெம் அம்-யென்னும்- சப்த ரூத்திரங்களுடனே இச்சா சக்தி சமேதராயாடியதாகும்.

### தாண்டவ லாசியம்

அதர்வண வேதசாரம் சிங்காரம், வீரம், காருண்யம், அற்புதம், ஆச்சரியம், பயம், பீபச்சம், ரவுத்திரம், சாந்தமென்று நவரசங்களுடனே கிரியா சக்தி சமேதராயாடியதாகும்.

சிவபெருமான் ஒரு காலத்தில் தமது நடன லாசியத்தின் அற்புதத்தை நந்திகேஸ்



வரரால் உருத்திர கணிகைகளுக்குக் கற்பிக் கச் செய்து, தமது தேசங்களையானுகின்ற அரசருக்கு முன்பு ஆடுகின்றவளுக்கு 'இராஜதாசி' என்றும், தமது அடியார் கிர கங்களிலாடுகின்றவளுக்கு 'அலங்கார தாசி' என்றும், தமது ஆலயங்களிலாடுகின்ற வளுக்கு 'தேவ தாசி' என்றும் பேரிட்டு இவர் கள் நடனம் பார்க்கின்றவர்கள் எப்போதும் சுகஜீவிகளாயிருந்து மோட்ச சாதனத்தை அடையக் கடவது என்று ஆக்ஞாபித்தார்.

முற்காலத்து நடனத்தையும், தற்போது நடைபெறும் நடன நிகழ்ச்சிகளையும் ஒப் பிட்டுப் பார்க்கும்போது, இரண்டிற்கும் அதிக வித்தியாசங்களிருப்பது தெள்ளென வெளிப்படுகிறது. முன்பு, நாட்டிய நிகழ்ச்சி கள் எல்லாம் பெரும்பாலும் கோயில்களில் தான் அரங்கேற்றப்பட்டு வந்தன. நாட்டி யத்தில் கடவுளையே தலைவனாகக் கொண்டு தன் தொண்டுகளைத்தையும் அவரது திருப்பாதத்தில் அர்ப்பணிப்பதாகப் பாடல் கள் அமைக்கப்பட்டும், ஆடப்பட்டும் வந் தன. பின்பு காலச் சுழற்சியில் இம்முறை மாறி, நாட்டிய நிகழ்ச்சிகள் வேந்தர்கள் முன், அரசவையில் மன்னவர்தம் புகழ் பாடி நிகழ்த்தப்பட்டு வந்தன.

### சபாரஞ்சகம்

முற்காலத்தில் 'ருத்ர கணிகைகள்' எனப்படும் தேவதாசிகள் நாட்டியக் கலைக் குத் தம்மை அர்ப்பணித்துக் கலைத் தொண்டு புரிந்து வந்தனர். ஆலயங்களில் உற்சவ காலத்தில் ஸ்தல புராணங்கள்படி நாட்டிய நாடகங்கள் ஆடப்பட்டு வந்தன. இது சாஸ்திர சம்பிரதாயமாகும். இந் நாட் டியத்தை தனிப்பட்ட முறையில் ஒருவர் ஆடு வதற்கும், ஜோடி நாட்டியம் ஆடுவதற்காக வும், தஞ்சை நால்வரான பொன்னையா, சின்னையா, சிவானந்தம், வடிவேலு இவர் களால் தஞ்சை சரபோஜி மஹாராஜா காலத் தில் அலாரிப்பு, ஜதிஸ்வரம், சப்தம்,

வர்ணம், ஸ்வரஜதி, பதம், ஜாவளி, தில் லானா என்று பாடல்களையும், ஸாஹித் யங்களையும், தெலுங்கிலும், தமிழிலும் செய்யப்பட்டு ஆலயங்களிலும், அரச சபை யிலும், கல்யாண காலத்திலும் நாட்டியம் ஆடப்பட்டு வந்தன. 'சம்பிரதாயம்' என சொல்லப்படும் ஒரு நாட்டிய நிகழ்ச்சியில் புஷ்பாஞ்சலி, அலாரிப்பு, ஜதிஸ்வரம், சப்தம் வர்ணம், பதம், ஜாவளி, கிருஷ்ண கர்ணாம் ருத ஸ்லோகம், தில்லானா ஆடப்பட்டு வந் தன.

நாட்டிய நிகழ்ச்சிகள் சபையில் கொணர் வதற்குப் பெருத்த ஆக்ஷேபணைகள் இருந் தன. நாதஸ்வரமும், நாட்டியமும் கோவில் சின்னங்களாகக் கருதப்பட்டதால் அவைகள் 'டிக்கட்டுக்கு' சமர்ப்பிப்பது சம்பிரதாய விரோதமாகக் கருதப்பட்டது, இதுவே பெரிய மேளம், சின்ன மேளமெனக் கூறப் பட்டது.

அந்நிலை மாறி சபைகளில் இவ்விருண் டும் கச்சேரிகளில் இடம் பெற்றவுடன் மாறு தல் பல செய்யப்பட்டன. சம்பிரதாயமும் சபாரஞ்சகமாகவும் கலந்து பஜன சம்பிரதா யத்திலுள்ள "ஜய ஜானகி ரமண" மல்லாரி என்னும் ஸ்வாமி புறப்பாட்டிற்கு நாதஸ்வ ரத்தில் வாசிப்பதை ஜதியாகத் தொகுத்து சமர்ப்பிக்கப்பட்டது. இத்துடன் தீக்ஷிதர் க்ருதிகள், சாமா சாஸ்திரி க்ருதிகள், தியாக ராஜ சுவாமிகளின் பஞ்சரத்ன க்ருதிகளான "ஜகதானந்தகாரகா", "ஸாதிஞ்சனே" போன்றவைகளும் சேர்க்கப்பட்டன. சுவாதி திருநாள் மஹாராஜாவின் "பாவயாமி ரகு ராமம்", கமலஜாஸ்ய" ராகமாலிகைகள், சில மலையாளப் பதங்கள் இடம் பெற்றன. இதைத் தவிர அலாரிப்பிலேயே சொற்கட் டும் அருணகிரி நாதர் திருப்புகழும் தொகுத்து வழங்குவதும் நேர்ந்தது.

### காலத்திற்கேற்ற மாற்றங்கள்

முன்பு சம்பிரதாயப்படி ஒரு நாட்டிய நிகழ்ச்சியில் பெரும்பாலான நிருத்த, நிருத்

திய உருப்படிகள் ஆடப்பட்டவுடன், பாவப் பொலிவுகளடங்கிய பதங்கள் (சுப்பராமய்யர் பதம், அருணாசல கவிராயரின் ராம நாடக கீர்த்தனைகள், கோபால கிருஷ்ண பாரதி யின் பாடல்கள், சுப்பிரமணிய பாரதியாரின் பாடல்கள், பாபநாசம் சிவன் க்ருதிகள், ஊத்துக்காடு வேங்கட சுப்பைய்யரின் ஸாஹித்யங்கள், மற்றும் புரந்தரதாஸர், கனகதாஸரின் கன்னட தேவர் நாமாக்கள், இடைவேளைக்குப் பிறகு இடம் பெற்றன. பிறகு சில வித்வான்களின் சொந்த ஸாஹித் யங்களும் அபிநயம் பிடிக்கப்பட்டது.

மாற்றங்கள் நேர்கையில் எதிர்ப்புகளும் கண்டனங்களும் தோன்றின, சில 'பழம்' நட்டுவனார்கள் அலாரிப்பில் திருப்புகழ் கலப்பதை (ஒருவர் சொற்கட்டு சொல்வது, மற்றொருவர் பாடுவது) சம்பிரதாய விரோத மாக எதிர்ப்புத் தெரிவித்தனர். சங்கீதத்தில் திருப்புகழ் பாடி மங்களம் பாடுவது சம்பிரதா யம். நாட்டியத்தில் ஆரம்பத்தில் அலாரிப்பு சொற்கட்டுடன் நாட்டை ராகத்தில் பாடு வது வழக்கம், இத்துடன் திருப்புகழை ஆரம்பத்திலேயே இணைப்பது உசித மில்லை என்று எதிர்த்தனர். தவிர சொற் கட்டுகளுடன் திருப்புகழ் சங்கீதமும் ஒருங்கே இணைந்துவரின், நாடகங்களில் வாத்திய பின்னணியில் உரையாடல்கள் (dialogue) வருவது போல் இருக்கிறது என்றும் அபிப்பிராயப்பட்டனர்,

தவிர, முற்காலத்தில் நாட்டியம் ஆரம் பிப்பதற்கு முன்பு 'மேளப் பிராப்தி' என்று வாத்தியங்களில் நாட்டை வாசித்து, மிரு தங்கத்தில் சொற்கட்டை அமைத்துப் பிறகு அலாரிப்பு ஆடுவது சம்பிரதாயமாக இருந்த தாம். பிறகு "ஜய ஜானகி ரமண"வை மேளப் பிராப்தியாக இயக்கினார்கள். வேத காலத்திலிருந்தே நாட்டிய மிருந்ததே இது ராமாயண காலத்தில், பஜன சம்பிரதாயத் தில் வந்த பாடலாயிற்றே, அதை எப்படி மேளப்பிராப்தியுடன் இணைக்கலாமென்று

ஒரு வாதம் ஏற்பட்டது. அந்தந்த ஆலயங் களின் ஆதி தேவனைக் கொண்டு பாடி நாட்டியம் ஆரம்பிக்கலாமே என்றும் கூறி னார்கள். ஆனால் மேடைக் கச்சேரியான வுடன் இவ்வெதிர்ப்புகளெல்லாம் படிப்படி யாக மழுங்கிவிட்டன. காலத்திற்குத் தக்கபடி இவையெல்லாம் அங்கீகரிக்கப்பட்டு வருகி ருது.

சபாரஞ்சகமாகச் செய்வதிலும் ஒரு வரைமுறையைக் கடைப்பிடித்தல் அவசியம். சம்பிரதாயம் வருவாமலும், அதே சமயம் சமயோசிதமாகவும், இடம், காலம், நேரம் பொறுத்து, பாடுபடுத்தி ரஞ்சகமாக அளிப் பதும் ஒரு நாட்டிய ஆசானின் முதற்கடமை. ஒரே மாதிரியாக சம்பிரதாயமாகவோ அல் லது சம்பிரதாயத்தைத் தவிர்த்து சபாரஞ்ச கம் என்ற பெயரில் பாமர ரஞ்சகமாகவோ செய்வது பொருத்தமாகாது.

ஒரு உதாரணத்திற்கு, ஒரு பதம் எத் தனை அழகான மெட்டில்மைந்திருந்தாலும் ஸாஹித்யப் பொலிவுடனும், அபிநயிப் பதற்கு மிகச் சிரேஷ்டமானதாகவுமிருந்தா தாலும் அது ஒரு 'கண்டிதா' நாயிகாவை வர்ணிப்பதானால் கல்யாண கச்சேரிக்கு உகந்ததல்ல. "இந்தெந்து வச்சிதிவிரா" (சுருட்டி), "இதி நீரு மரியாதகா" (பேகட) போன்ற அற்புதப் படைப்புகள் கல்யாண அரங்கில் ஆட முடியாது. அவை சபைக்கே — பொது அரங்கமோ, ராஜ சபையோ ஒத்தது.

இதேபோல் ராஜ சபையிலோ, மேடைக் கச்சேரியிலோ ஆடக்கூடிய 'நரஸ்துதி' உருப்படிகளை, (உ.ம்.),, 'ஸாமிகி ஸரி எவ்வரே (சங்கராபரணம்) "தானிகே" (தோடி) போன்ற வர்ணங்கள், "ஏ மாயலா டிரா" என்ற வைரம் பாய்ந்த உசேனி ஸ்வரஜதி கோவில்களில் ஆடமுடியாது. ஆயினும் அவைகளின் நேர்த்தியான பாட லமைப்பையும், நாட்டியக்கோப்பையும் முன் னிட்டு சமயோசிதமாக "தானிகே" வில்



“சிவாஜி மஹாராஜுனி” என்பதை “ஸ்ரீராம சந்திரா” என்று மாற்றியமைக்கப்படுகிறது. அதேபோல் உஸேனி ஸ்வரஜதியும் மஹா விஷ்ணுவின் பேரில் இயற்றப்பட்ட ஸாஹித்யத்தை ஆடலாம்.

மேடைக் கச்சேரிகளில் ரசிகர்களுக்குத் தக்கப்படி சம்பிரதாயப்படி அலாரிப்பு, ஜதிஸ் வரம், முறைப்படி வர்ணம், பக்தி பாவங்களில் சில பதங்களுடன் தமிழ் நாட்டில் தமிழ் பதங்களும், பாரதியார் பாடல்களும், தெலுங்கு தேசத்தில் ஷேத்ரக்ஞர் பதங்களுடன் சூர்னிகையும், அஷ்டபதியும், கேரளத்தில் மலையாள பதங்களும், கன்னட தேசத்தில் தாஸர் நாமாக்களும் சேர்த்து அமைப்பது உசிதமாகிறது. வட நாட்டில் இன்று ஹிந்தி ‘பஜன்’களையும் பதருபமாக பக்தி பாவத்துடன் அபிநயிப்பது நடைமுறையில் வந்திருக்கிறது.

### நாட்டிய அமைப்பு — ஒரு மகா கலை

ஆயின் சபாரஞ்சகம் என்ற பெயரில் தன்னிச்சையாக உத்திகளை சேர்ப்பது நாட்டிய சம்பிரதாயத்திற்கு இழுக்காகும். உதாரணமாக யாவரும் அறிந்த “தெருவில் வரானோ” என்ற கமாஸ் பதம் சிவபெருமானை ஊர்வலக் கோலத்தில் கண்டு தன் மனதைப் பறிகொடுத்துப் பக்திப் பரவசத்தில் தன்னையிழந்த ஒரு நாயிகா, தன்னை ‘வாஸக ஸஜ்ஜிகா’வாக உருவகித்து மறு முறை ஊர்வலத்தில் வருகிறாரோ, அவர் கருணைக் கண் தன் மீது படாதோ என்று அபிநயிப்பது பொருத்தம். அதற்குப் பதில்

மேலெழுந்தவாரியாக வீதியில் வரமாட்டானா, என்னைத் திரும்பி (கள்ளத்தனமாக) பார்க்கமாட்டானா என்று அபிநயிப்பது தரக் குறைவாகும். இது குறைகூறுவதற்காகவல்ல. எதையும் ஆய்ந்து, ஆய்ந்து, உள்ளார்ந்த அர்த்த பாவங்களைப் புரிந்து செய்தால் நேர்த்தியாகவே இருக்கும். இதற்குத்தான் பாடல்களை நாட்டியத்தில் அமைக்குமுன் (Choreography) ‘பாத்திரத்தின் அடிப்படைத் தன்மை, ‘பாவம்’ [Character and Sthayibhava] பதத்தின் போக்கு, சந்தர்ப்பங்கள் முதலியவைகளை அறிந்து, யோசித்துப் பொருத்தமாகத் தொகுக்கவேண்டும். ஸாஹித்யப்படி சில பாவங்கள் செய்ய முடியாது. அதாவது பதார்த்தாபிநயம். [உ.ம்] “சின்னஞ்சிறுகிளியே—இங்கு சின்னஞ்சிறுகிளி ஒரு பக்ஷியல்ல. வாத்ஸல்யத்துடன் ஒரு தாய் தன் குழந்தையை அழைக்கிறாள். இதில் வாத்ஸல்ய பாவமே பிரதானமாகிறது, இப்படியாகக் கோர்த்துச் செய்ய வேண்டும்,

சம்பிரதாயமே பிரதானமாகக் கொண்டு இக்காலத்தில் நாட்டியக் கச்சேரி செய்தால் ரசிகர்களுக்குத் திருப்தி ஏற்படுவதில்லை அதே போல் சபாரஞ்சகமாக எல்லாம் தமிழில் ‘டிராமா’ போல் செய்வதும் வித்துவான். கள் ஒத்துக்கொள்வதில்லை. ஆகவே நாட்டிய தர்மியும், லோகதர்மியும் அமைத்து, பண்டிதர்களுக்கும், பாமரர்களுக்கும் சம்பிரதாயமாகவும், சபாரஞ்சகமாகவும், தரம் குறையாமல் திருப்தி அடையுமாறு கச்சேரி செய்வது உத்தமமாகும்.

